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GATEKEEPERS OF THE FAMILY: REGULATING FAMILY MIGRATION TO FINLAND

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the normative underpinnings of family migration in public discourses, in policies and their implementation. At the same time, it investigates the normative frameworks that regulations on family migration create. The relationship between family norms and immigration control is mutually co-constitutive: while policymakers and bureaucrats rely on publicly accepted and common-sense understandings of “acceptable” family life, at the same time they themselves contribute to constructing these norms.

The study builds on interviews with immigration bureaucrats, analyzes parliamentary plenary debates, Helsingin Sanomat newspaper editorials, as well as court cases from the Helsinki Administrative Court. Methodologically, it develops the notion problem frames by combining frame analysis with the Foucauldian notion of problematization. The analysis is based on the understanding that public debates are socially constitutive speech acts that shape our understanding of family migration and eventually contribute to the policy agenda and policy framing.

Intersectionality works as analytical tool to examine how constructed categories mutually reinforce each other and create axes of inclusion and exclusion. There are certain conditions in which some family ties grant people the right to belong, while other people are excluded and positioned as unwanted. The study conceptualizes struggles over the right to belong as gatekeeping and bordering processes, in which the nation-state is reinscribed and defined through exclusionary discourses and problem frames.

The thesis arrives at three main conclusions. First, the analysis shows that migration regulations cause, prevent, and require dependence: dependence on the sponsor/spouse, dependence on the welfare state, and dependence on a caring family member. Each of these dependencies has different implications and effects for different, intersectionally positioned groups of migrants. Second, this thesis shows that the way in which migrant families are evaluated is part of a dual process of moral gatekeeping. On the one hand, moral justifications are used to argue for the inclusion or exclusion of certain families, while on the other hand, the gatekeeping of morals works to portray certain families as a threat to Finnish family norms. Third, this thesis shows that gendered assumptions about care relations influence whether or not family ties qualify a person for a residence permit in Finland. Furthermore, the right to care for elderly parents is connected with questions of cultural citizenship.

Overall, the key finding is that in the regulation of family migration, formal and informal axes of exclusion are part of one and the same continuum. They are based on a set of shared assumptions, discourses, and modes of thought that categorize and label migrants.

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II Horsti, Karina and **Saara Pellander.** 2015. "Conditions of cultural citizenship: Intersections of gender, race and age in public debates on family migration." *Citizenship Studies*. 19 (6-7): 751-767.
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IV **Pellander, Saara.** 2015. "'An Acceptable Marriage': Marriage Migration and Moral Gatekeeping in Finland." *Journal of Family Issues*. 36(11): 1472-1489.
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The publications are referred to in the text by their roman numerals.

For publications II and III, the names of both authors appear in alphabetical order to indicate equal contribution.

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1 INTRODUCTION

When two elderly women, one from Russia and one from Egypt, were faced with deportation from Finland in 2008 and 2009, there was a public outcry. Finland's biggest nationwide daily newspaper asked for "mercy" for these grandmothers, who had children and grandchildren living in Finland and were seeking residence permits to be close to their family members. The public debate, which was highly vocal in both the social media and the news, was managed mainly by NGO advocates and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. Yet even the president of the republic took a public stand and demanded that these women be allowed to stay in Finland. At the heart of the outcry was the question of what constitutes family. In the Finnish Parliament, the Christian Democrats maintained that the present understanding of a nuclear family breaks intergenerational ties. They argued that the devotion of these families to their elderly parents should set an example for all families in Finland.

But who is a family member? How are families expected to live, come together, and sustain their bonds across national boundaries in ways that qualify them for family reunification in a new country? If we establish rules and regulations that answer these questions, from what assumptions about acceptable family life do they create and build?

Although for a long time family migration escaped the attention of politicians, journalists, and researchers alike, since the turn of the millennium we find recurring media reports on the frequency of so-called marriages of convenience, on the long queues in family reunification cases, and on the question of whether foster children should be accepted as immediate family members. Migrant family relations have shifted from being neglected in public debates and research to being one of the central migration and integration policy issues in European countries (Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015). Finland is no exception in this regard; as this thesis summary is being written, the Finnish government plans to tighten requirements for family reunification even further. These plans have sparked a vast public debate, a debate in which various NGOs, researchers, journalists, and politicians have criticized the plans to require an income from humanitarian migrants who are applying for family reunification.

Family migration and the way it is governed and regulated is embedded in the larger power dynamics of migration and border control, and for that reason it cannot be separated from a broader understanding of governance over people's movements across national borders. Yet the regulation of family migration touches on issues that make it rather different from most other grounds for seeking legal entry into Finland. The family as an institution is laden with moral underpinnings, with expectations of care relationships, with gendered and hetero-normative perceptions of the role of partners or parents,

with contestations over what constitutes acceptable family life. It is these moral understandings of families and marriages intertwined with the desire to regulate incoming migration that this thesis is concerned.

The study seeks to explore the normative underpinnings of family migration in public discourses and policies, as well as their implementation. At the same time, it seeks to investigate the normative frameworks created by regulations on family migration. Debates and decisions on migrant families are based on rather racialized hierarchies of belonging. This thesis examines the intersecting ways that race,¹ gender, class, sexuality, nationality, and age put some people in more desirable positions as family migrants than others.

The time frame of the thesis begins in 1990, just before the official collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Yet the data from the early and mid-1990s did not make it into the final analysis for the publications, since family migration did not become a topical issue for political debate until the end of that decade. The main corpus of analysis consists of data from 1999 onwards. The last material that I collect for my thesis, namely, interviews with immigration bureaucrats, is from 2013. For this summary, I also include some of the legal changes introduced by the government that took office in 2015, so the period of my investigation ends before the culmination of the so-called “European refugee crisis.”

By showing how the state, its politicians and bureaucrats, as well as public political debates define and implement the regulation of family migration, this thesis explores fundamental questions that are relevant in European welfare states today. My results show first of all how the dependence of family members on each other and on the state plays out in regulations of family migration (see chapter 5.1). The second central issue around which the results of the thesis evolve is what I call moral gatekeeping, which refers to the way in which moral underpinnings of the kinds of family or married life deemed morally acceptable shape how immigration regulations are drawn up and implemented (see chapter 5.2). The third central question that looms large in an era of an aging population is care. How do care relationships play out across national borders, and how do expectations about these relations influence people’s transnational family ties? (see chapter 5.3)

Nordic countries have featured prominently in the literature on marriage migration and family reunion, yet little is known about the debates and regulations in Finland. In addition to being the first large-scale research publication focused on the regulation of family reunification in Finland, this thesis contributes to the international research field with rather novel findings and approaches. The study shows the various ways in which age becomes relevant in family migration. Up until now, particularly old age has gone more or less unnoticed in research on the regulation of family migration. The present study thus expands the view on the intersectionality of the axes of

¹ For further discussion on the use of the concept of race, see chapter 2.4, p. 51..

exclusion and inclusion, given that age tends to be one of the neglected areas in that field.

The inclusion of interviews with those who make the decisions about granting residence permits expands the existing literature on immigration bureaucrats. Since the bureaucrats ultimately hold power over whether or not a residence permit is granted, their conceptions and understandings directly influence the possibilities of family reunion in Finland. With a combination of analyses of these interviews with analyses of court cases, parliamentary data, and media reports, the study shows how inequality operates on different levels and in public arenas, in discursive power structures and in individual decision-making.

The study also combines theoretical insights from feminist postcolonial scholars with theoretical concepts such as moral gatekeeping, transnationalism, intersectionality, and citizenship. Methodologically, it develops new notions such as problem frames (Publication III) by combining frame analysis with the Foucauldian notion of problematization.

In general, the concept of family is linked with population control and is particularly interwoven with questions of gender, sexual orientation, class, and culture (Alexander 2005, 23). But as Eithne Luibhéid correctly argues, immigration scholars often fail to show that immigration control not only reproduces sexual identities, categories, and norms, but also actively produces them, which is one of the main perspectives guiding this thesis (Luibhéid 2002, xi).

My analysis builds on constructivist ontology, based on my presumption that discourse constitutes reality. Thus, the way family migration is talked about, and how the policy implementers make sense of it, is not merely a question of opinion, but carries an important element of power. Such discourse not only reproduces hierarchies of belonging, but also participates in shaping and creating these hierarchies. This thesis also combines the theoretical tools and understandings of transnationalism, intersectionality, gendered citizenship studies, and postcolonial and feminist critiques of the Nordic welfare state as well as the concept of gatekeeping to explore how the regulation of family migration to Finland constructs norms and values that create borders of national belonging.

My data consist of parliamentary plenary minutes from 1991 to 2012, the Aliens Act and other policymaking documents, newspaper editorials from Finland's largest newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*, court cases on marriage migration from 2000 and 2005, as well as interviews with immigration bureaucrats and the police. This material is examined in four articles, using Foucauldian discourse analysis, particularly Carol Lee Bacchi's approach ("What's the problem represented to be") in combination with frame analysis, as well as Moran-Ellis's following-a-thread perspective.

This thesis summary is structured as follows: In the first chapter, I introduce the topic of family migration to Finland and the Finnish migratory context. Then I present the central provisions and laws regulating family

migration. I give an overview of existing literature on the topic and position myself within this literature, before presenting the objectives and research questions of the study at hand.

The second chapter positions the thesis theoretically by exploring how transnational migration flows have been theorized on the basis of family ties. I present the concept of intersectionality as I conceive of it before exploring my understanding of gendered and cultural citizenship as these relate to the study. I then take up the (Nordic) and feminist understandings of postcolonialism and the welfare state that which inform my analysis. Finally, I discuss (moral) gatekeeping as it applies to this study.

Chapter three presents my data and methods, chapter four gives a brief overview of the articles, chapter five summarizes and discusses my research results, and chapter six offers concluding remarks.

1.1 SITUATING FAMILY MIGRATION

Until the beginning of the twenty-first century, family migration² was rather neglected in both Finnish research and Finnish policy debates. This is not to say that family migration has not played a crucial part in Finnish migration history. While debates on unaccompanied minors arriving in Finland as asylum seekers use historical reference rather selectively, it is important to bear in mind that it was not too long ago that Finnish children were sent to Sweden and other Nordic countries as “war children” during World War II.³ In discussing the settlement and re-settlement of refugees and their families in Finland today, one should bear in mind the huge relocation during that war of Finns who left the region of Finnish Karelia, which was ceded to the Soviet Union. A recent example of the relevance of family ties in Finnish migratory history is the so-called return migration of Ingrians to Finland in the 1990s. Finnish family ties dating back to the generation of grandparents were enough to facilitate an expedited and easier admission to Finland (Martikainen, Saari, and Korkiasaari 2013).

Most social scientific research on immigration to Finland points out that Finland did not begin to diversify until the end of the 1980s, with the 1990s being the period when the number of incoming migrants began to grow

² While some scholars focus on marriage migrants, as does part of this study, I refer to family migration, which includes the migration of spouses, both married and cohabiting, as well as other family members. I use the concept of “family migration” as an umbrella term to refer both to marriage migration and to the migration and reunification of other family members.

³ Between 70,000 and 80,000 children were sent to foster families in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark during World War II. They stayed for several years, and an estimated 7, 000 to 15,000 children remained there permanently (Kavén 2011; Kuusisto-Arponen 2007; Knuutila and Levola 2000).

rapidly. However, historians point out that this argument is rather shortsighted: Finland has not been as homogeneous as many recent scholars make it sound (Tervonen 2015b; Tervonen 2015a). Finland is, first of all, home to minorities such as the Swedish-speaking population, the native Sámi, the Roma, and the Muslim Tatars. Finland also took in large groups of Russian refugees after the Russian Revolution in 1917 (Leitzinger 2008). The colonizing of the Sámi or the racist exclusion of the Roma are chapters of the racist history of Finland and other Nordic countries that are too readily ignored and forgotten, because they do not fit into the picture of the welfare state that strives for equality (Loftsdottir and Jensen 2012).

Finland's economic history is one of migration and international trade; companies founded at the end of the nineteenth century by people such as Karl Fazer, whose father was of Swiss origin, the Germans Gustav Paulig and Georg Franz Heinrich Stockmann, as well as the Russian Nikolai Sinebrychoff, have featured among the most prominent Finnish companies down to the present.

In the post-World War II period, Finland was marked by a restrictive immigration policy, attributed in particular to Eila Kännö, head of Alien Affairs in the Ministry of the Interior's police department in the years 1970–84. Because Finland did not have any legislation on Alien Affairs during this time,⁴ the previous administrative practice served as a guideline for subsequent decisions.

The first groups of post-World War II refugees arrived in Finland from Chile and Vietnam in the years 1973–78. In the 1990s, Finland's internationalization began to intensify when the first groups of Somali asylum seekers arrived via the Soviet Union. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the freedom of movement granted to Russian citizens contributed to growing migration numbers; Russians are still among the largest groups of incoming migrants. Finland joined the European Union (EU) in 1995, further increasing international mobility into Finland. Today, the largest groups of migrants are from neighboring countries, such as Estonia, Russia, and Sweden. (Martikainen, Saari, and Korkiasaari 2013)

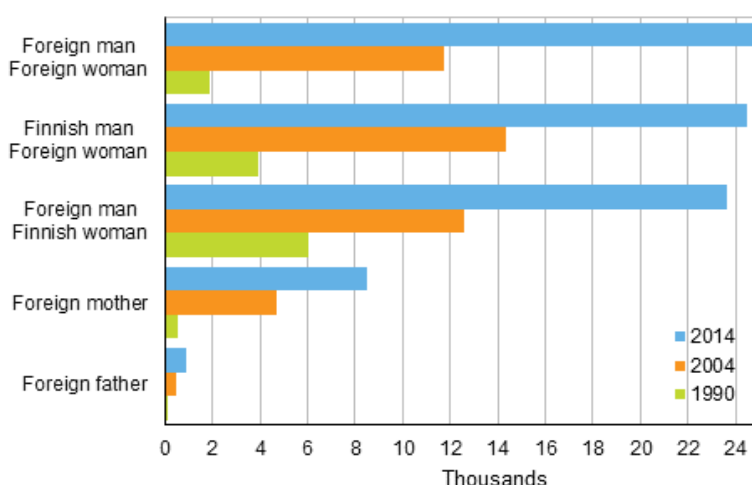
The Nordic countries signed the first agreement abolishing the need for carrying a passport within the Nordic region in 1952, and in 1954 extended the agreement to not needing a residence permit for the other Nordic countries (Tervonen 2015b). Thus, it was fairly easy for Finns to move to Sweden and work there. Finland's structural change and the peak in unemployment in 1967–1968 caused mass emigration to Sweden at that time. By the 1980s, Finnish return migrants from Sweden made up 85 percent of those moving to Finland from abroad. A Finnish Advisory Board for Migration Affairs was established in 1970. At that time, its main role was to work on issues related to Finnish emigrants and returnee migrants, and it was not until 1985 that the Advisory Board also took questions of immigration onto the agenda. Finland's

⁴ The only regulation on Alien Affairs, which dated from 1950, stated that there was no right to appeal previous decisions.

first Aliens Act was passed in 1983 (Pellander 2009; Lepola 2000; Mykkänen 1998).

The majority of migrants who permanently settled in Finland before the increase in immigration in the 1990s came for reasons of marriage (Martikainen, Saari, and Korkiasaari 2013). The mid-1990s marked a turning point in gendered patterns of marriage migration. Until 1994, more Finnish females married foreign males than the other way around; after 1994, marriage migration into Finland became a predominantly female phenomenon, as it is globally.

Figure 1: Families of foreign citizens living in Finland in 1990, 2004, and 2014.



Official Statistics of Finland (OSF): Families [e-publication]. ISSN=1798-3231. Annual review 2014, 2. Four percent of families entirely foreign-language speaking. Helsinki: Statistics Finland [referred: 15.4.2016]. Access method: http://www.stat.fi/til/perh/2014/02/perh_2014_02_2015-11-27_kat_002_en.html

Among Finns whose marriage partners come from outside Finland, men and women tend to choose different nationalities. In 2014, the most common choices of female partners for Finnish men come from the former USSR, Sweden, Thailand, and Estonia (see Figure 2). As for Finnish women, the countries where they most commonly find marriage partners are Sweden, the UK, Germany, and the former USSR (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: Foreign-born spouses of Finnish-born men by country of birth in 2014

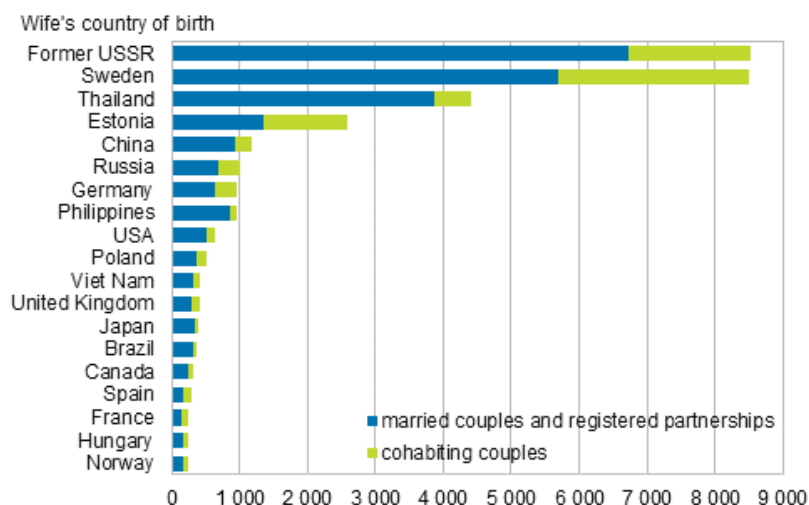
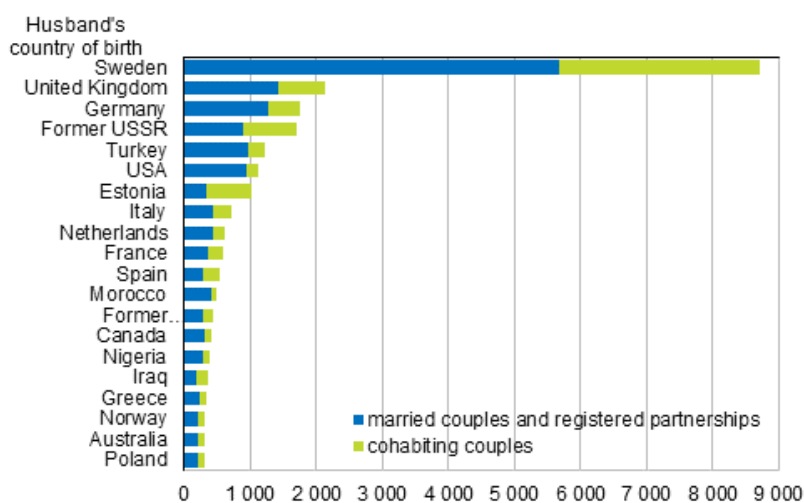


Figure 3: Foreign-born spouses of Finnish-born women by country of birth in 2014.



Source: Official Statistics of Finland (OSF): Families [e-publication]. ISSN=1798-3231. Annual review 2014, 2. Four percent of families entirely foreign-language speaking . Helsinki: Statistics Finland [referred: 15.4.2016]. Access method: http://www.stat.fi/til/perh/2014/02/perh_2014_02_2015-11-27_kat_002_en.html

Finnish society has undergone fundamental changes in how perceptions, discourses, and institutions conceptualize the movement of people. One conception is related to public discourses on migration, another to public perceptions and opinions on migration, and a third to the development of laws, regulations, and institutions that govern migration. In general, the 1990s were marked by debates and legislation on refugees and asylum seekers, as well as by the return migration from Ingria. Family reunification did not feature large in public political debates, but it became more topical around the turn of the new millennium (see Publications I and II). Around the time Finland's new Aliens Act came into force in 2004, public anti-immigration sentiments were on the rise. These sentiments culminated in the rising popularity of the populist party then called the True Finns (now known as the Finns Party), which has a clear anti-immigration agenda.⁵

The interaction of immigration control and family norms with which this thesis deals offers insight into some of the central debates that have grown ever more topical in the Nordic countries. The Nordic welfare state tends to be conceptualized in public political discourse as a site of integration and social cohesion, yet also as something that is threatened by immigration. Parties like the Finns Party that want to restrict immigration often justify their positions as a way of protecting the welfare state (Keskinen 2016; Jönsson et al. 2013). In most Nordic countries,⁶ migrant residents with legal residence permits have entitlements to social benefits similar to those of other citizens, thanks to the Nordic countries' residence-based welfare state system (Lister et al. 2007, 86). In her comparison of six different welfare states, Sainsbury (Sainsbury 2012) found that regardless of the type of welfare state, migrants are disadvantaged compared to native citizens. This first systematic comparative analysis of immigrants' social rights across welfare states shows that migrants have fewer

⁵ The True Finns originated as a populist agrarian party called the Finnish Rural Party (Suomen Maaseudun Puolue, SMP). The party mostly revolved around the politician Veikko Vennamo; its political ideology has even been called vennamolaisuus, or Vennamoism. Begun as a protest party which supported the interests of small farmers and the unemployed, SMP was also well known for criticizing Finnish president Urho Kekkonen and the Finnish government for its too Soviet-friendly foreign policy. SMP had its biggest electoral success at the beginning of the 1970s, winning about 10% of the votes. It ended up having only one parliamentary representative in the 1995 elections, Raimo Vistbacka. In 1995, the party was discontinued and went bankrupt, as its lack of support had caused severe financial problems. The successor to the SMP, the True Finns, was founded in 1995, and Vistbacka was their first MP. The True Finns had great success in the municipal elections in 2008 and rose to the third largest party in the parliamentary elections of 2011. In the 2015 elections, the True Finns again became the third largest party in terms of votes, and the second largest in terms of seats in parliament. The party is part of the centre-right government coalition formed after the 2015 elections.

⁶ With one exception, Denmark, which departed from the Nordic principle of universalism in 2002 by introducing the so-called "start help" for incoming migrants during their first seven years in the country. This benefit amounts to a smaller sum than social assistance, and it thus creates a system with two different standards for welfare provisions – one for native citizens and one for migrants.

employment opportunities, a lower standard of living, and less access to benefits.

The Nordic welfare state was previously based on the principle of universalism as a precondition of citizen equality and employed universalist social policies instead of means-tested or corporatist ones. Yet this principle seems to be eroding. In Denmark, migrants are subject to specific welfare schemes and receive lower benefits than members of the national population (Andersen 2007). While writing this in the fall of 2015, plans by the Finnish government were afoot to pay a lower minimum social benefit to asylum seekers in Finland. As these debates show, the notion of universalism is severely challenged and threatened by policies intended to protect the welfare state from those perceived as outsiders. As this thesis will show, the framework of the Nordic welfare state is particularly relevant in examining the economic and care dependencies that immigration policies create and shape (Eggebo 2010).

Before introducing debates on immigration and the welfare state, it is vital to examine critically the notion of the Nordic welfare state and define what is meant by it. Almost every study on the welfare state starts off by quoting Gøsta Esping-Andersen and his distinction between liberal, corporative, and social democratic welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990). Yet this distinction has been criticized from several perspectives. Feminist research has argued that these classifications do not take into account the gendered nature of welfare states. Esping-Andersen's typology is concerned with the degree of decommodification of paid labor which a welfare state permits, discourages, or encourages. Yet it does not take into account women's unpaid care work. In order to be decommodified, their work would have to be commodified first. The typology fails to consider female poverty, or the way in which certain welfare provisions affect men and women differently (Langan and Ostner 1991; Lewis 1992; Orloff 1993; Hobson 1994; Borchorst 1994; O'Connor 1993; Sainsbury 1996).

In response to this critique, Esping-Andersen introduced the notion of defamilialization, which refers to policies that maximize the individual's independence from family resources (Esping-Andersen 1999, 45). Scholars have criticized Andersen's understanding of defamilialization from the perspective of women's independence, as it measures the welfare state's support of family and not how welfare states enhance the independence of individual women (Bambra 2004).

There has also been growing criticism of the literature on the welfare states' neglect of ethnicity and of how certain welfare state policies affect migrants or how migration influences welfare state policies (Banting and Kymlicka, Will 2006; Sainsbury 2012). Another criticism holds that research on welfare state models tends to neglect transnational historical and empirical trajectories, as Kettunen and Petersen (Kettunen and Petersen 2011) point out. Instead of seeing welfare states as national entities, these authors argue that welfare states should be conceptualized as the result of a transnational movement of

ideas and policy solutions, each of which carries different historical contingencies. Kettunen and Petersen suggest that welfare state models should be seen as analytical ideal types rather than as empirical realities.

The Nordic model has been conceptualized as a model with five exceptions – one for each Nordic country (Christiansen, Petersen, and Edling 2006). Feminist scholars have pointed out that despite their similarities, the Nordic countries show national variation in their welfare and child-care policies, women's work-life participation and women's political participation. Begqvist et al. speak of "five different gender profiles" (Bergqvist et al. 1999). The Nordic countries also differ in their migration histories and policies (Mulinari et al. 2009).

I am not suggesting that there is an ideal type of Nordic welfare state (Kettunen 2001). I am using the notion of a Nordic welfare state as an analytical tool through which I link family migration to existing welfare state literature, literature that either analyzes individual Nordic cases or refers to institutional and legal similarities or differences between the Nordic countries.

Restricting immigration has often been justified politically by the limits of welfare state resources and the costs of immigration (Keskinen 2016). Mulinari and Neegaard (Mulinari and Neegaard 2005) refer to the position of migrants in the Nordic welfare state as subordinate inclusion. In their research on the Swedish case, Mulinari and her co-authors show how policies and public debates position migrants as groups with potential claims on welfare state services, rather than as active contributors to society (Mulinari et al. 2009, 5). The concepts of welfare nationalism and welfare chauvinism capture the ways in which excluding policy mechanisms define certain groups that are excluded from and discriminated against by the welfare state (Suszycki 2011; Mulinari et al. 2009; Keskinen 2016).

The Nordic countries have recently introduced a number of restrictions on family-related migration, which can be viewed as a form of unwanted migration (Joppke 1998; Staver 2015). This stands in contrast to the treatment of the immigration of highly skilled workers, which has been facilitated in several Nordic countries.⁷ To shed further light on the restriction and regulation of family migration, the following section explores the main regulations on family migration relevant to the Finnish context.

⁷ Nevertheless, work-related migrants also often find themselves on the margins of the welfare state.

The situation of seasonal or circular workers is particularly problematic, and there are recurring reports of exploitative and precarious employment of groups such as domestic workers, berry-pickers, or construction workers (Gavanas 2010; Kontula 2010; Lutz and Palenga-Möllnbeck 2012). Irregular migrants, migrant sex workers, and trafficked migrants are also subject to exploitative and precarious policies and have little or no access to welfare state services (Lund Thomsen et al. 2010; Nielsen 2013; Skilbrei and Tveit 2008).

1.2 REGULATING FAMILY MIGRATION

Family migration is the relocation of family members either to form a family or to reunite with family members. Family migration can thus mean immigration through which residents in the receiving country are united with immediate family members who are living in another country. This is often referred to as family reunion, the completion of the relocation of a family. Marriage migration also falls under the category of family migration; it refers to the migration of one partner to the country of residence of the spouse. Marriage migration can either be inter-ethnic, that is, between two spouses of different ethnic origin, or intra-ethnic, which happens in cases of chain migration or so-called “homeland” marriage of the second generation (Charsley 2012). In most European countries, family reunion is also possible for spouses of the same sex (see Publication I as well as chapter 5.2 for discussion).

Scholars and policymakers alike have divided the policies that steer and govern migration into immigration and integration policies. Although the two policy fields of entrance and integration were traditionally separate, scholars show how in several European countries, a set of integration standards has been developed and applied to arriving migrants (Borevi 2015; Kofman et al. 2013). Family migration policies include requirements for a certain type of housing, a condition that the family’s local sponsor is not relying on welfare benefits for support, and requirements governing language skills and educational background. While Denmark’s requirements are the most restrictive of these, in Finland, the mandatory income for family migrants combines entry and integration requirements. Thus, already at the level of immigration policies, understanding what constitutes protecting the nation from certain outsiders becomes blurred in defining the rights of the insiders. It is these “blurred areas” between differential inclusion and exclusion (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013) with which this thesis is concerned.

In order to understand how and in what context the regulation of family migration in Finland takes place, it is vital to be aware of the legal framework and the requirements that shape the regulation of family migration. In the following section, I will give a brief overview of the regulations of family migration that relate to the Finnish context.

I do not view the regulation of family migration as merely a set of technical requirements which migrants have to meet. In addition to influencing whether or not someone is allowed to reside legally in Finland, these regulations shape the way people who move between countries are talked about and thought about. At the same time, public discourses and political rhetoric as well as the perceptions of bureaucrats shape the way these categorizations are legally crafted and implemented; moreover, the categorizations have certain legal and social rights as well as obligations attached to them (see for example Luibhéid 2002; Wray 2011; Luibhéid 2013).

Neither in the individual publications nor in the thesis summary will I focus on the legal changes in the Aliens Act or the way in which certain policies have developed during the period of my investigations. Instead of taking for granted the way family migration is regulated and focusing only on regulations, my aim is to question the categories that immigration bureaucrats employ. I examine how public discourses on family migration create intersectional positionalities that draw boundaries of accepted and unacceptable family life. These boundaries are clearly apparent in categories such as “immigrant,” “asylum seeker,” “illegal immigrant,” and so forth. Michel Agier points out the “devastating logic of categorizations” (2001, 33), and reminds us that labeling and categorizing those who move between nation-states is always a political act. Thus, even if I will be merely repeating legal categorizations, I will not be taking these categorizations for granted, as will become clear in my theoretical considerations in chapter 2, in my discussion of my research results in chapter 5, as well as in the individual publications.

Legislation on family migration regulates the immigration of immediate family members. It includes rules on cross-border family formation and family reunification. The definition of who is considered a family member in immigration regulations depends on whether the sponsor and/or the family member are EU or non-EU migrants, since the regulation of family migration places them in different categories. For the movement of citizens of an EU member state or of the European Economic Area (EEA),⁸ the applicable regulation is the EU directive on free movement within the EU member states (Directive 2004/38/EC). For each country, there are national regulations that control the migration of people who are not EU/EEA citizens to join family members living in that country. These two sets of rules affect EU citizens who move to another EU country and marry someone who is a non-EU/EEA citizen (Pellander 2014).

By moving to another EU member state, EU citizens exercise their right to move and reside freely. After having lived in another EU country, EU citizens obtain the right to bring their family members into their host country. Since the definition of family members is broader for families of EU citizens than for other nationals, if a couple in which one of the spouses is an EU citizen migrates to another country, that citizen becomes an EU “free mover” migrant (Carrera 2005). One of the best-known examples of this are couples who move from Denmark to neighboring Sweden to escape the strict Danish rules for family reunification (Wagner 2015; Pellander 2014).

As I show elsewhere (Pellander 2014), there are three types of family ties that qualify people for family reunification. Family members who migrate through family reunification are either the children of a resident, the parents or guardians of an underage child residing in the country, or a partner who is

⁸ The European Economic Area (EEA) unites the EU member states and the three EEA EFTA states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) in an Internal Market governed by rules which state that goods, services, capital, and persons should be able to move freely.

either married, cohabiting, or living in a registered partnership. In exceptional cases, it is possible to bring other relatives, such as elderly parents into the host country. In the case of elderly relatives, most countries require proof that these relatives are completely dependent on the family member living abroad and are unable to get care in their country of residence (see Publication II as well as chapter 5.3 for a more thorough discussion of this issue). For EU citizens who live in another EU member state, the broader definition of “family” means that parents of adult children can also join their child in another EU/EEA country (Pellander 2014).

The EU directive for family reunification (2003/86/EC) provides guidelines for the family reunification of third country nationals, meaning migrants from countries that are not members of the EU or EEA countries. The directive has not been adopted by Denmark, Ireland, or the United Kingdom.⁹ Norway is not a member of the European Union, but, as a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) and party to the Schengen Agreement (borderless Europe), Norway is obliged to adopt EU regulations. In 2012, a working group established by the Finnish Ministry of the Interior compared the regulations in Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, and found that Finland and Sweden have very similar regulations on family migration, while Denmark and Norway are more similar to one another (Sisäasiainministeriön maahanmuutto-osasto 2012).

In most countries, there is some sort of minimum income requirement, either of the incoming migrant or of the so-called “sponsor,” that is, the resident family member, with certain exceptions. In Finland, the monthly income requirement is €1,000 for the first adult and €700 for the second adult. For underage children, the monthly income is €500 for the first child, and €400 for the second child. Thus, for those seeking reunion with a spouse and two children, the monthly income of the sponsor needs to be €2,600. This amount is after taxes, which, even if one manages to have a steady, full-time job, still excludes many from seeking family reunion. The newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* demonstrated that about one-half of Finland’s working population would not be eligible for family reunification, and further, that in order to bring a wife and two children into the country, even professions such as veterinarians, graphic designers, actors, nurses, coders, or primary school teachers would not be able to meet the requirement (Paavilainen and Peurakoski 2016).

These income requirements do not apply to family members of Finnish citizens. Humanitarian migrants, such as refugees, are also exempt and only need to proof an income when establishing family ties, so in effect marrying somebody, after having moved to Finland, but these exemptions are being tightened (see Publication I as well as chapter 5.1 for further debates on

⁹ The UK, Denmark, and Ireland have stricter policies on family reunification than those in the EU directive and have opted out of the EU directive in order to implement policies that do not grant incoming migrants even the minimum standards set out by the directive for family reunification.

income requirements). The center right government elected in 2015 and led by Prime Minister Juha Sipilä announced plans to tighten the income requirements for humanitarian migrants, and a proposal by the government to change the law in this regard was presented to the Finnish parliament in April of 2016. I will return to the debates on applying the income requirement to humanitarian migrants later in this section, as the topic was being publically debated in Finland at the time this thesis summary was being finalized in the spring of 2016.

At the time of writing in spring 2016, there is no minimum requirement for how long a Finnish sponsor has to have lived in Finland before being eligible to bring in family members. Norway requires four years of work experience and/or education in Norway in order to sponsor a family member; in Denmark, non-EU/EEA citizens must have had permanent residence for three years with certain exceptions. Unlike Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, Finland does not have any housing requirements for migrants. Denmark requires immigrants to have an apartment of reasonable size according to prescribed specifications, but this requirement is waived if underage children are moving in with their parents. Norway has housing requirements for some groups of migrants who are outside the “nuclear family.” Sweden has a housing requirement, but refugees and children are exempt (Sisäasiainministeriön maahanmuutto-osasto 2012). Denmark is the only Nordic country with an age limit for marriage migration: both the local sponsor and the incoming migrant must be at least 24 years of age (Pellander 2014).

Family relations constitute the main grounds for granting residence permits in Europe and the Nordic countries. Thirty percent of all decisions pertaining to residence permits in the Nordic countries are made on the basis of family ties with the exception of Denmark, where the decisions based on family ties went from around 30 percent of all resident permit decisions between 1988 and 2001 to only 9 percent in 2010. This drop in the number of family migrants was the result of tighter restrictions on family reunification, which Denmark introduced after 2001 (Pellander 2014).

In the following section, I will give an overview of the main changes in Finnish legislation affecting family reunification during the years of my research into this topic (my main focus in terms of legislation and policy debates is on the years 1999-2010, but I include some developments after 2010). This overview is not comprehensive, as there have been so many small changes and amendments that listing them all would make for a difficult read.

Until 1999, Finland’s Aliens Act of 1991 did not clearly define who could be granted a residence permit on the basis of family ties. As with the amendments that came into force in 1999, the law defined who could be considered a family member, namely, the spouse of someone residing in Finland and unmarried children under the age of 18 for whom a person residing in Finland was the legal guardian. For underage children living in Finland, family members were their legal guardians. The amendment also specified that a cohabiting couple would be treated like a married couple, with the proviso that they must have

lived together for a minimum of two years (in the Aliens Act of 1991, this period was only one year). This minimum period of cohabitation did not apply if the couple had a child. The same amendments of 1999 introduced an income requirement for non-Nordic residents, with exemptions for humanitarian migrants. A major change in the 1999 amendments was the introduction of the applicant's right to appeal a negative decision. The law allowed for both the Finnish sponsor and the family member abroad to apply for family reunification (FINLEX 1999).

A new Aliens Act came into force in 2004. Among its changes, same-sex couples were considered family members if their union was registered. For underage children, the new law specified that a child must be under the age of 18 on the day the application was filed. Prior to the Aliens Act of 2004, applicants had to wait in their home countries for a decision by the Finnish immigration authorities. Since 2004, it has been possible for family members to reside in Finland while awaiting the decision. A change that was highly relevant to the choice of interview data for this study concerned applications for residence permits. Local police stations were given the responsibility for processing applications of family members of Finnish citizens, which previously had been processed by the Finnish Immigration Service. After 2004, Finnish embassies made decisions only on visas and not on residence permits (FINLEX 2004).

Since 2004, there has been a number of amendments to the new law, several of them related to the EU directive on family reunification. Finland did not adopt all the provisions of the directive; as this thesis summary was being written at the beginning of 2016, Finland still had some policies in place that were more favorable to family migrants than those in the directive.

One amendment to the Aliens Act of 2004 that came into force in 2006 was directly related to the EU directive on family reunification. In Finnish law, only children of the local sponsor are considered family members; however, the directive defines children of the sponsor's spouse as being family as well, an amendment that was added into Finnish law. Also, a maximum time limit of nine months for deciding family reunification cases was added into the law in accordance with the EU directive (FINLEX 2006).

The Finnish Aliens Act of 2004 further stated that if a person constitutes a danger to Finnish international relations, that person can be refused a residence permit on the basis of family ties. Because this part of the law was not in line with the EU directive, it was removed with the 2006 amendment. The amendment also made it easier for those applying for a residence permit on the basis of family ties to work without a separate work permit.

Another change that followed the EU directive was that, in making decisions on family reunification, the authorities now had to take into account the nature of the family ties, the duration of the stay in Finland, the strength of the family bond, as well as cultural and social ties to the home country (see Publication IV as well as chapter 5.2 for a more thorough discussion on the role of culture). An amendment to the law passed in 2009 (FINLEX 2009)

granted those under humanitarian protection or temporary protection the right to bring family members other than their immediate family to Finland, where they would otherwise be unable to continue their previously existing “close family life” (*kiinteä perhe-elämä* in Finnish), or if the relative in another country was totally dependent on the person residing in Finland, that person could be permitted entrance (see Publication II and chapter 5.3 for more discussion on this topic).

In 2010, the Aliens Act was tightened in a way that especially affected underage children. Whereas previously a child had to be under 18 at the time of application, now children had to be under 18 when the decision on family reunification was made (FINLEX 2010). Since processes of family reunification may take years, even children who came to Finland at age 15 or 16 might not be able to bring their parents to Finland.

Another restriction in the law states that residence permits on the basis of family ties can be denied if there is reason to suspect that the sponsor, that is, the family member residing in Finland, has given false information about their identity or their family relations when they were granted their residence permit. According to one bureaucrat I interviewed, this restriction is particularly cumbersome, since many people are not aware that by giving, for example, wrong estimates of ages or dates related to their family members at the time of their initial asylum hearing, they might never be able to reunite with their family.

At the beginning of 2012 Finland introduced biometric residence permits. These permits include finger prints, with the result being that a migrant now has to apply personally for a residence permit at the closest Finnish embassy. Often this can involve travel to another country, which for financial and practical reasons can be too difficult to undertake. This particular measure has caused a significant drop in the number of applications for family reunification. The number of applications for residence permits based on family ties dropped by 19 percent between 2011 and 2012. The most significant drop was in applications for family members of those under humanitarian protection. While there were 2,014 applications in 2011, the number dropped to 599 in 2012 and stayed low, with 594 applications in 2013. In 2015, family reunification of those under humanitarian protection made up only 16 % of all residence permit applications on the basis of family ties. This number is likely to go up, after the number of people seeking asylum in Finland went up in 2015. With regard to positive decisions, the effects of the tightened requirement are even more apparent. In 2013, only one child was able to bring her parents to Finland. The other 156 applications were denied.

There are, of course, many parts of Finland's Aliens Act that do not deal directly with family migration, but rather concern those who seek family reunification. Among these are provisions on whether temporary or permanent permits are granted, the length of time the respective residence permits cover, and provisions on deportation or detention. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to cover all past and current Finnish migration legislation

with its respective legal implications, which is why I only outline some central legal changes with a specific focus on family ties.

As stated above, family migration is often considered “unwanted,” owing to the expectation that most migrants who move for family reasons will not integrate into the labor market. Kofman et al. (Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015) show in their comparative study on family migration policies in Europe that the integration of migrants is commonly thought to have failed. Migrants are said to be marginalized and to constitute “an ethnic underclass” (Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015, 5). Uneducated spouses are particularly seen as being unable to raise and educate the next generation, and thus social inequalities are reproduced (Joppke 2007; Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015). Kofman et al. argue that the policy response to this logic is to select migrants with a certain background and prevent family formation with spouses who are not expected to participate in the labor market. I call this process of selecting spouses of a certain socio-economic background “economic gatekeeping.” In the Nordic countries, economic gatekeeping involving family migrants has been established by introducing certain income requirements for either family migrants and/or their spouses.

Finnish debates on family migration have mostly focused on whether or not Finland would attract family migrants by having more favorable policies than other Nordic countries. In 2010, under the reign of a center right government, the Finnish Ministry of the Interior published a report to the parliament comparing European entry regulations on family reunification. The report concluded that “. . . the policies on family reunification in Finland in comparison to other states are no more attractive than in other countries” (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010).

Only one year later, the Finnish government formed in 2011 by a so-called rainbow coalition of almost all parties – the Social Democratic Party, the National Coalition party, the Swedish People’s party, the Green Alliance, the Christian Democrats and the Left Party (in other words, all parties except the agrarian Centre Party and the populist True Finns) – stated in its government program that Finland’s policies on family reunification might need to be modified in line with those of the other Nordic countries. A report by the Finnish Ministry of the Interior published in 2012 suggested that Finland should introduce a broader income requirement for more groups of humanitarian migrants. It also announced that it would investigate the need to include more groups of humanitarian migrants in the income requirement, as well as to add a housing requirement (Sisäasiainministeriön Maahanmuutto-osasto 2012). These investigations have never been carried out.

Attitudes toward migrants have since become even less favorable. The center right government under Juha Sipilä introduced further restrictions regarding refugees and their families. Restrictions on Finnish refugee policies were part of the governmental program, but the so-called “refugee crisis” in 2015 sped up these plans and made it easier to argue politically for more

restrictive legislation. Finland is drafting restrictions such as temporary residence permits for refugees, assessing the security level of migrants' country of origin twice a year, thereby leaving people in constant fear of deportation, and extending the income requirement to refugees and other humanitarian migrants. This continues the 2004 trend of the income requirement being applied to some humanitarian migrants as well (see Publication I).

A bill for tightening this part of Finland's Aliens Act was presented to Finnish parliament in early 2016. The new law would extend the current income requirement to those under international protection¹⁰. According to the law proposal, they would have to prove an income above Finnish median income level in order to bring a spouse and two children to Finland (FINLEX 2016). Less than half of the Finnish population earns the amount which the new proposal requires from people who have fled to Finland (Tilastokeskus and Valtioneuvoston kanslia 2016). People who have recently moved to Finland tend to find jobs in low-income professions (Könönen 2014). Thus, in effect, for many people the bill would make family reunification impossible.

The bill has provoked criticism. Organizations such as Amnesty International Finland, the Finnish Refugee Council, the Refugee Advice Centre, the Finnish Red Cross, Finn Church Aid, Save the Children, The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters, Finnish Somali League as well as numerous researchers and private people have publicly opposed the proposal. There have been petitions, letters to the editor and other newspaper articles, and public statements, discussions and events. The statements by these various actors stress that integration becomes difficult when people's primary worry is being separated from their families, and point out that the effects of the tightened legislation already in force have not been evaluated adequately (Amnesty International 2016).

In the original bill that the Ministry of the Interior published in January 2016, the income requirement would have affected even Finnish citizens and their family members (Sisäministeriö 2016), causing even politicians from the parties in government to criticize the proposed changes. The version of the bill which was presented to Finnish parliament in April 2016 did finally omit the extension to Finnish citizens (FINLEX 2016).

The bill puts people who receive international protection in unequal positions. Those who were granted refugee status would have three months to reunite their families, without an income requirement. People under subsidiary protection would always have to prove an income. It is clear that the aim of the change in the Aliens Act is to exclude as many people as possible from moving to Finland. The bill actually states clearly in the preamble that the aim is to make Finland less "attractive" (FINLEX 2016).

¹⁰ International protection is an umbrella term which refers to resident permits that are granted on humanitarian grounds.

The income requirement has a gendered bias, as Kofman et al. (Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015) point out. On average, women earn less than men and therefore have greater difficulty meeting the income requirements. For example, the demanding requirements introduced in the UK in 2012 mean that 61 percent of employed women in Britain as well as 32 percent of employed men do not earn enough to sponsor a family member (Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015). It is worth noting that family-related migration is not always “unwanted.” Certain groups of family and marriage migrants are excluded from restrictive measures and are thus positioned as “more desirable” than others (Staver 2015). In Finland, these are family members of Finnish citizens, for example, as well as those from other EU member countries and citizens of the Nordic countries. As Johanna Leinonen and I show in Publication III, certain racialized limits to family formation became apparent through statistics, given that the decisions of immigration bureaucrats clearly favor applicants from certain countries such as the United States or New Zealand, whose citizens have an almost 100 percent acceptance rate of their applications (Publication III).

The bill on extending the income requirements to humanitarian migrants will be voted on in June 2016, the same month in which this thesis is published and publicly defended. Thus, it is probable that this thesis will attract a lot of public attention. The changes that the government is proposing affect refugees and other humanitarian migrants. While this thesis does not focus on refugees in particular, who during the time of writing formed only a minority of family reunification cases, this study shows the difficulties of defining and proving family ties regardless of the residence status of the sponsor. If proving the existence of shared family life can be difficult for transnational married couples with a Finnish partner, one can only imagine the hardship involved when the family member abroad lives in a refugee camp or has stayed behind in a country torn by conflict and war.

With these policies in mind, we now turn to previous research on the topic of family migration in order to establish the scholarly area to which this thesis contributes and how the present study can be positioned within the growing field of research on family migration.

1.3 RESEARCHING FAMILY MIGRATION

This study contributes to the growing scholarship on the regulation of family migration and marriage migration. This thesis focuses on Finland, which has so far been a blank spot on the map of scholarship on the regulation of family and marriage migration. When I began my research, there was hardly any scholarship on the topic in Finland. Existing Finnish research on family and migration had until that point focused mostly on the family dynamics of certain nationalities or religious groups, not on the regulation of family

migration (Leinonen 2011; Leinonen 2012; Sirkkilä 2005; Vuorinen 2004). During the time I have been working on this project, research on regulating family migration in Finland has been emerging. While writing this thesis summary in 2016, the first Finnish language book on family reunification came out, a book to which I contributed with two co-authored chapters myself (Fingeroos, Tapaninen, and Tiilikainen 2016). There is an ongoing Ph.D. project on intimate relationships, culture, and the law by Sanna Mustasaari (Mustasaari 2014). Outi Fingeroos has been working on a project exploring family reunification practices and policies focusing on Somali family reunification (Fingeroos 2014). The practice of DNA testing as part of family reunification policies has been studied in a project by Ilpo Helén and Anna-Maria Tapaninen (Tapaninen and Helen 2013). Hanna-Kaisa Kuusisto-Arponen is working on the topic of unaccompanied children, exploring children's experiences of forced migration, their transcultural memories and strategies of belonging (Kuusisto-Arponen 2015).

My approach differs in that I do not look at one central unifying factor among family migrants, such as Somali nationality or Muslim religion; a single bureaucratic practice, such as DNA testing; or one particular group, such as unaccompanied children. Instead, I focus on how political discourses and implementation practices on family migration are linked to central questions of a Nordic welfare state. I look at the ways in which dependency plays a role in family reunification policies, I explore how gendered understandings of acceptable family life are constructed and evaluated, and I examine questions of transnational care, age, gender, and cultural citizenship. By focusing on family migration, I am able to contribute to larger discussions that transcend its regulation. In the following section, I will explore this field in greater detail and explain how this thesis contributes to the topic and how the study differs from existing approaches.

Family and marriage migration scholarship used to be divided into research on transnational family ties and research on the policies and regulations of family migration. While the two approaches used to be conceptualized separately, recently, there have been calls for a more integrative approach that combines the perspectives of policies and regulations with those of family migrants themselves (Charsley 2012; Fernandez and Jensen 2014). Scholars who focus on transnational families and their practices have explored how families maintain ties and connections across borders (Baldassar, Wilding, and Baldock 2007; Baldassar and Merla 2014; de Bruine et al. 2013; Bryceson and Vuorela 2002; Levitt 2009; Pitkänen, Içduygu, and Sert 2012; Parreñas 2005; Goulbourne et al. 2010).

While the main focus of this study is not transnational families, but rather state authorities and regulations on family migration, transnational family ties and agency of marriage migrants are still taken into account (chapter 5.3 and Publications II and III). As Wray (Wray 2011, 9) stresses, literature that focuses on state practices and regulations runs the danger of presenting migrants as mere objects and as targets of policies and restrictions. It is

important to acknowledge and bring out migrants' agency and lived realities. Family reunification policies affect how migrant families live their lives. Their choices of how and where to live together, as well as their familiar dependencies might change due to certain requirements they have to meet (Liversage and Rytter 2014; Strasser et al. 2009; Fernandez and Jensen 2014; Breger 1998; Fair 2010; Kraler 2010; Schmidt 2011; Riaño 2011). State policies have also affected the order in which certain marriage rituals take place (Aybek 2015). Particularly in countries with very strict policies on marriage migration, couples might develop strategies to bypass the requirements legally, for example, by moving to another EU country with more favorable policies and re-entering their countries as EU free movers (Wagner 2015).

Although I refer to this relevant literature, I do not focus on strategies of the migrants themselves, but rather on the governmentality of family migration. Thus, I take a top-down approach, one that puts those who govern, steer, publically debate, and implement family reunification policies at the center of analysis.

The first two publications for this thesis (Publications I and II) are based on an analysis of parliamentary plenary debates and newspaper editorials, and thus operate on the level of political debates. Helga Eggebø's analysis of the way the income requirement was debated and drafted in the Norwegian parliament points to issues similar to those that I am addressing in my research, namely, gendered dependency relations and how they fit into understandings of a Nordic dual breadwinner model (Eggebø 2010). Saskia Bonjour and Betty de Hart's analysis of Dutch public debates on family migration are very similar in their approach, and start from the same assumption as this thesis, namely, that migration policy is both a product and a producer of values and identities (Bonjour and Hart 2013). Bonjour and Hart show that othering of certain migrants serves to justify restrictions in migration policies (see also Razack 2004). These understandings and the othering of migrant family life, which underlie immigration policies and policy debates in several European countries, are highly gendered in their conceptualizations of migrant women and men. As an overview of the international research on the issue shows, these debates are surprisingly similar across national contexts (Bonjour and de Hart 2013; Hart 2007; Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015; Kraler et al. 2011; Kraler 2010; Palriwala and Uberoi 2008; Walsum 2008). Garbi Schmidt even speaks of a "hegemonic discourse" on the topic of marriage migration (Schmidt 2014, 131). In the book which is based on her dissertation, Laura Block explores the topic of marriage migration through the perspective of regulating membership (Block 2016).

The present study is informed by the aforementioned international research on this hegemonic discourse on gender, family, and migration, which it places in a Finnish context. Yet it differs by taking an explicitly theoretical perspective on intersectionality, which I will elaborate on in chapter 2.1. I ask how the regulation of marriage migration positions migrants in intersecting

categories of inequality and with what effects (see research question 1, chapter 1.4). Here, one central topic linked to questions of dependence and the welfare state is that of the income and/or subsistence requirement, which is particularly high in Norway and England (Staver 2015; Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015; Leerkes and Kulu-Glasgow 2011).

Policies and policy debates on family migration are one way of studying how family migration is regulated, but the debates leave out something important: the implementation of policies. The work of national and international courts both implements immigration legislation and steers the work of street-level bureaucrats. Thus, an analysis of court cases on family migration provides insights into the justifications that are used to make claims for or against the right of family reunification. Several famous scholars of marriage migration are legal scholars (Walsum and Spijkerboer 2007; Hart 2007; Bhabha and Shutter 1994; Wray 2011), and their work informed and inspired me to work on the topic of family migration and gender. Yet the analysis of court cases I conducted took a somewhat different approach than previous research by stressing the role of transnational family ties for the evaluation of marriage migration and by bringing out the difficulties related to marriage migration at an older age. As this study is also concerned with the way in which couples represent their marriages with the help of their lawyers, the findings are related to other research on the work of lawyers in court cases on family migration files, such as that of Natasha Carver (2014). This thesis also asks what the evaluation of migrant family relations tells us about gendered understandings of family life (see chapter 1.4 and research question 2).

Another way in which my research is situated in and supplements previous research on family migration is in examining how the role of state bureaucrats in deciding on residence permits in their implementation of family regulation is defining acceptable family life. As Satzewich points out, state bureaucrats work as the gatekeepers of border control, and even in times of growing undocumented migration, most migrants pass through some form of bureaucratic control at some point of the migratory process (Satzewich 2015, 21). Satzewich's extensive research on Canadian Immigration Officers conceptualizes their work as operating on the meso-level, between the macro-level of factors that shape inequalities between states and the micro-level in which an individual makes a migratory decision and which encompasses the consequences of migration for individuals and households. Satzewich takes his understanding of immigration bureaucrats at the meso-level from Stephen Castles and Mark Miller, who speak of the meso-level as the "migration industry" (Castles and Miller 2009, 28).

Satzewich's book explores the factors that influence the decision-making process by focusing on the discretion exercised by immigration officers. He criticizes scholars who argue that the regulation of immigration is linked to institutional racism or to the outcome of personal racist opinions. While he recognizes that people from certain areas of the world are disadvantaged in

immigration procedures, he does not find racism a convincing explanatory mechanism:

Though it is tempting to see the sorting of applicants by visa officers into deserving or undeserving categories as a form of institutional racism, or racial discrimination without prejudice, the discrimination that exists in the visa issuance process is actualised via a technical and administrative logic, and by various organisational and macro-level forces that shape how visa officers exercise their discretion. Though these mechanisms may disadvantage applicants from some countries or regions, it is not obvious that such disadvantages are based on race. (Satzewich 2014, 1466)

I will return to this point in the conclusion of this summary (chapter 6).

In the German context, Tobias Eule has gained access to immigration officers and offers insight into the workings of German immigration regulation. His key finding is that decision-making and working in immigration offices is mostly chaotic and arbitrary. He stresses that it is crucial to examine the interactions between the immigration official and the client, and he speaks about the mechanisms of socialization that experiences of immigration control have on migrants' lives, following Goffman's and Foucault's understandings of how subjects are changed by institutions (Eule 2014, 128).

Antje Ellerman also looks at how public opinion favoring migration rights puts pressure on immigration bureaucrats. She argues that public opinion is not as restrictive as most literature on the topic suggests, and, through an analysis of German immigration bureaucrats, she shows how they respond to public opinion in support of migrant advocates by enacting even more restrictive measures (Ellermann 2006).

In addition to scholarship on consulates and immigration officers/bureaucrats in general, some studies examine the ways in which street-level bureaucrats are involved in evaluating family ties. Here, the key question is how the bureaucrat makes an evaluation of what constitutes a "real" marriage, which is also a concern of the current research (Maskens 2015; Alpes 2014; Eggebø 2013b; Satzewich 2014; Wray 2011).

While all of these studies focus solely and in great depth on the workings of immigration bureaucracy, other research combines analysis of immigration officers with other data, as I do in this thesis summary. Helga Eggebø has studied migration officers and the way they work in the Norwegian context (Eggebø 2013b). Eggebø conducted fieldwork in the Norwegian immigration directorate. While Satzewich paints a picture of overworked Canadian officers who try to meet the quotas set by their superiors, Eggebø's account shows the emotional involvement of the bureaucrats in making decisions on family migration cases. She asks whether immigration bureaucrats have their own ethical and moral legitimacy or whether they follow an ethical procedure based on moral impulse. She concludes that in their accounts of ethics, immigration

bureaucrats display both. Eggebø's analysis is part of her Ph.D. thesis, in which she examines couples and their experiences, as well as political debates on the income requirement (Eggebø 2012). Yet in the scope of a rather short thesis summary, it was not possible for her to make broader comparisons on how her findings work across different data sets.

In this regard, my approach comes closer to that of Helena Wray, who looks at how marriage migration is regulated in Great Britain. In her book *Regulating Marriage Migration into the UK: A Stranger in the Home* (Wray 2011), Wray follows the interaction of political discourse and decision-making, the interpretation of the law by courts, and the implementation by bureaucrats, and she shows how assumptions and practices translate from one level to the next. Wray's main finding is that there is a hierarchy of acceptable marriage migrants and spouses built on the assumptions of decision-makers. Among the central connecting themes that feature in these assumptions are race, arranged marriages, and gender. During the period 1962 to 1997, non-white marriage migrants and their children were particularly subject to restrictions in the UK and even to discriminatory measures. Race played a crucial role during this period, while after 1997 exclusion on cultural and religious grounds became central markers of difference. Although the present study spans a smaller scale, a shorter time period, and a more limited set of data, it too seeks to combine analogous data comprised of public political discourse, court cases, as well as interviews with immigration bureaucrats, yet from a slightly different theoretical perspective. Although Wray clearly shows, for example, how race and gender affect the ways in which certain groups of migrants are treated, she does not conceptualize these findings within a framework of intersectionality, which is a central perspective in the current study. Yet Wray's work has had an important influence on the present research, because it was through her article on moral gatekeeping in relation to the regulation of marriage migration to Great Britain (Wray 2006) that I became aware of the concept of moral gatekeeping and decided to adopt it as a key perspective in this thesis.

The main contribution of my thesis to previous scholarship on family migration lies first of all in the combination of different sets of data. In addition, this study focuses on Finland, which the research on family migration has so far not adequately explored. Finally, the analysis brings out questions that have been given little attention in previous family and marriage migration scholarship, such as the perspective of elderly migrants.

Having established the empirical fields¹¹ in which this study operates, I now want to introduce studies on migration and the family that take a

¹¹ Other perspectives on marriage migration that have been explored in previous scholarship but will not to be central to this thesis include scholarship exploring cross-national marriages of certain nationalities or certain geographical settings (Charsley 2013; Rodríguez-García 2006; Fleischer 2011; Suksomboon 2011; Górny and Kępińska 2004) ; the Europeanization of family reunification policies

theoretical approach similar to mine. Of these, it is particularly Eithne Luibhéid's work that resonates best with the conceptualizations used in this study. In her work, Luibhéid follows the Foucauldian understanding of governmentality and analyzes how migration management shapes and produces migrant identities. The regulation of migration is shown to be part of a hetero-normative system that shapes understandings of what is normal and acceptable. Luibhéid uses queer theory to show how sexuality and intimacy transfer power relations. Her work is not based on a specific definition of "family," yet it sheds light on how configurations of valued family life are changing and persisting and how these configurations produce hierarchies of gender, age, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, and geopolitics (Luibhéid 2013, 123).

The present study revolves around similar analytical and theoretical questions raised by Luibhéid, but in a very different empirical setting and from a somewhat different perspective. In the following section, I will formulate the research objectives and the research questions that guide this thesis.

1.4 OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study seeks to explore the normative underpinnings of family migration in public discourses and policies and their implementation. At the same time, it seeks to investigate the normative frameworks that regulations on family migration create. The relationship between family norms and immigration control is mutually co-constitutive: while policymakers and bureaucrats rely on publicly accepted and common-sense understandings of "acceptable" family life, at the same time they themselves contribute to constructing this normative framework. Particularly from a historical perspective, the ways in which marriages and families function appears unstable without a "Finnish" understanding of what family life is or should be. Yet negotiation of the boundaries of "Finnishness" takes place when ties between Finnish residents and foreign citizens are evaluated and the policies that govern them discussed. The politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2011) take on a new dimension, as family reunification is as much about belonging to a spouse, parent, child, or grandmother as it is about belonging to an imagined Finnish community (Anderson 2006). When something that is public and nationally governed, such as the decision about who is allowed to enter and reside in a certain country, encounters the intimate and private question of familiar bonds, ties, and responsibilities, the inside-outside dimension of citizenship is re-negotiated (see Eggebø 2012).

(Block and Bonjour 2013), and the effects that tightening immigration regulations have on migrants themselves (see, for example, Schmidt 2014; Riaño 2011).

While each of the four publications that make up this thesis has a specific perspective and its own research questions, there are three main questions that this introduction and the discussion of the results of Publications I-IV will address. These questions reflect the different perspectives taken up in the thesis and also are informed by the theoretical and methodological traditions of which this study partakes and to which it seeks to contribute.

As stated previously, policies that govern and regulate family migration are not gender neutral. Processes of gendered othering lie at the heart of debates about migrant family life, and marriage and the family itself are concepts that are heavily laden with gendered assumptions. This is why the main research question focuses on gendered norms of belonging. These assumptions play out along different axes of exclusion in regulations, debates, and the implementation of family migration. I view gender as being embedded in several axes of exclusion that are mutually reinforcing. Processes of sexualization and racialization are part of immigration systems which control migrants “through inspection procedures and knowledge regimes” (Luibhéid 2002, xxiii).

Family migrants are more and less desirable; the family member of an EU citizen, for instance, is in a completely different position than someone from outside the European Union. Moreover, the admission rates for different groups of migrants show racialized hierarchies of being welcomed into Finland as a family migrant. Far too little attention has been paid to age in family migration and how age intersecting with other categories creates certain modes of inclusion and exclusion. Due to income requirements and other restrictions, class and the socio-economic background of those seeking family reunion in Finland play important roles. Taking seriously the challenge of an intersectional analysis, this thesis seeks to discuss and answer the following research question:

1. Which intersecting categorizations does the regulation of family migration produce and with what effects?

As I will explore later, I conceptualize the different levels of immigration control as parts of a gatekeeping process. The “gatekeepers” are those who plan and discuss restrictions on family migration and put these restrictions into practice. By gatekeeping, I refer to all parts of the process in which the regulation of family migration is embedded, from public discourses to the implementation of the Aliens Act. By identifying the processes that are at work when family migration is regulated, this thesis explores the following question:

2. Which gatekeeping processes are at play in discussing and implementing the regulation of family migration?

The family life of migrants who apply for a residence permit on the basis of family ties is under close scrutiny. Although there is official legislation on this

matter, there is still a certain leeway in how the policies are implemented. Because there are few definitions of what a family is or should be in national legislation, the Aliens Act is one of the few legislative documents that, in its implementation, defines how married life should be lived and who is counted as a family member. The way migrant families are evaluated not only reflects existing values of family life, but also produces those values by setting certain standards, which is why this thesis explores a further question:

3. How are migrant family relations evaluated for immigration purposes and what does this evaluation tell us about gendered understandings of family life?

These questions are informed by a variety of theoretical understandings that helped me formulate the questions in the first place, because they broadened my comprehension of the various dynamics related to migration and the family. At the same time, formulating the questions helped me conceptualize my findings, since the co-authored papers for this thesis proceeded in a deductive manner and the findings were conceptualized theoretically only after the first close reading of the material. Thus, the theoretical debates that I will explore in the following pages can be understood as both the background for my inquiries and, in part, as their results.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

“...it is tempting to say, counter-intuitively, that the family is not ‘domestic’ at all, but the most explicitly transnational of spaces” (Briggs, McCormick, and Way 2008, 640).

In 1992, the pioneering work of three anthropologists triggered an outpouring of multi-disciplinary studies on transnational migration. Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Christina Blanc-Szanton (Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton 1992, ix) defined transnationalism as the “emergence of a social process in which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders.” Research into transnationalism has examined, for example, formations of border-crossing communities, transnational consciousness marked by multiple identifications, modes of cultural reproduction, transnational political activity, webs of social fields that connect transnational actors to many localities, and capital flows spurred by transnational corporations (Vertovec 1999).¹² Over the past decade, researchers have also begun to examine how migrants create and maintain family ties across national borders. Bryceson and Vuorela’s (2002, 3) much-used definition of transnational families describes them as “families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely ‘familyhood’, even across national borders” (see also Herrera Lima 2001, 78). As this definition suggests, transnational care relationships have been at the center of scholarly work on transnational families (Kilkey and Merla 2013). A great majority of this line of research has focused on the transnational family ties of a single migrant group. There are studies, for example, on transnational mothering practices of female overseas workers who have left their children in their country of origin (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997). In recent years, scholars have also begun to examine how immigration policies and international regulations influence the maintenance of transnational family ties and how nation-states strive to restrict certain kinds of transnational family formations (Charsley 2012; Kilkey and Merla 2013). For example, scholars have examined legislative initiatives that aim to restrict the formation of so-called arranged or forced marriages with spouses coming from the migrants’ countries of origin (Ballard 2006; Bredal 2005b; Bredal 2005a; Schmidt 2011; Phillips and Dustin 2004). Publication III of this research in particular adopts the perspective of transnational families by

¹² Moreover, historians have shown that transnational connections and consciousness are by no means new phenomena. Even before modern communication technologies and modes of transportation, migrants “maintained extensive, and intensive, transnational ties and operated in what social scientists now call a transnational social field” (Foner 2001, 49).

showing how family relationships that transcend national borders can be used by nation-states as a tool of exclusion.

In this study, transnationalism serves not only as a way of conceptualizing migrant family life, but also as a way of avoiding methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002) by focusing on a single national context. I conceive of transnational movements as applying to the movement of people as well as to the travel of discourses, ideas, and concepts beyond the nation-state. Suvi Keskinen argues that certain European conceptualizations of Muslim family life are activated in Finland as parts of constructing nationhood and positioning Finland as part of “the West” (Keskinen 2012). Finnish discourses and practices are not national, but rather embedded in a transnational field. Finnish discourses are thus part of transnational discourses on gender equality, migration, and the family. I attempt to contextualize and mirror Finnish developments, particularly vis-à-vis those in other Nordic and European countries. In that way, transnationalism is both part of the phenomenon I am studying, that is, the regulation of transnational family ties, and at the same time a theoretical approach that I am choosing to take.

Yet my focus is on Finnish policies, discourses, and their implementation. As Kofman (Kofman 2005) points out, the nation-state remains the frame of reference, particularly in debates on restricting and allowing migration flows. I see transnational perspectives as a way of exploring the bordering processes that endeavor to protect what is conceived as “the national.” Methodological nationalism is not the absence of a critical perspective toward the nation state, but rather is a way in which researchers participate in exactly those processes that make society a national configuration and a way of displaying territorial power (De Genova 2013, 251).

The criticism of certain notions of transnationalism is, as Laura Briggs and her co-authors note, a certain form of shadow-boxing, as “. . . one can say a great many contradictory things about what is wrong with transnationalism and they will all be true about someone’s transnationalism, and those of us who think the paradigm productive feel compelled to defend ourselves against charges of complicity with work with which we disagree” (Briggs, McCormick, and Way 2008, 626). I find similar tendencies in discussions on intersectionality, which I will explore in the next subchapter. In studying transnational phenomena, I follow Briggs and her co-authors, who see transnationalism as a conceptual category which allows analysis of the nation as a contested and contradicted entity, in a way similar to that in which gender is a category for studying sexed bodies (Briggs, McCormick, and Way 2008, 627). But just as gender is a category that relates not only to sexed bodies, but also is a primary way of signifying power relationships in society at large, the nation works as an ideology extending “far beyond the naming of a piece of land” (Briggs, McCormick, and Way 2008, 637).

Although the present study is concerned with gender, it does not explore gendered migration patterns or the motivations for a migratory decision.

Instead, I am interested in the way in which sexuality, gender, age, race, class, and nationality work as intersecting axes that make certain migrants more desirable than others. Below, I will explicate the theoretical assumptions behind this understanding.

2.1 INTERSECTIONALITY

In analyses of migration policies, and political discourses on migration, there is an enormous number of categories being produced and re-produced in different ways by different actors. Some are created by policymakers to define who gains entry into a country and under what conditions. Others are implicitly created by certain rules and regulations not explicitly stated in the political debate. And last but not least, various categories of the constructed “we” include different sets of actors, powers, and institutions. As a researcher, one can easily make the mistake of reinscribing those categories without critically examining how they work together, intersect, and create lines of inclusions or exclusions. Just by speaking about family migration or marriage migration, as I do in this research, I am already reproducing an invented category that is part of migration governmentality. These categories do not describe, but rather shape reality according to a governmental logic of immigration regulations (Scott 1998; Könönen 2014). This is particularly dangerous in the study of migratory movements, where the categories, perspectives, and concepts created for the needs of immigration regulation tend to reappear in research on migration. Thus, researchers implicitly reinforce the governmentality shaped by institutions (Könönen 2014, 20). In a similar vein, Eithne Luibhéid reminds us of the Foucauldian view, namely, that books by scholars based on official immigration records are themselves participating in the disciplining and punishing of immigrants (Luibhéid 2002). Scholars should avoid conflating migrants with their legal statuses (Luibhéid 2013, 19).

I cannot claim to be innocent of these processes, particularly as many of them are implicit and do not depend on how critical or uncritical a researcher is. Yet I find that certain perspectives reproduce the aforementioned categories of governmentality more readily than others. I propose an intersectional perspective as a tool for theoretically conceptualizing the categorizations at play in immigration regulations as a paradigm for my own perspective and its impact, as well as for reflecting on my position as a researcher.

I understand intersectionality as a theoretical device which builds on the assumption that socially constructed categories situate subjects through multiple forms of oppression and privilege. This is more complex than it sounds. Intersectionality has become so widely used in feminist scholarship

that the ways of using and conceptualizing it are as vast and manifold as the field of feminist inquiry in general.

There is no agreement over whether intersectionality is a metaphor (Garry 2011), a theory (Reyes and Mulinari 2005; Yuval-Davis 2006), a nodal point (Bilge 2010; Lykke 2005), a tool (Nash 2008; Staunæs 2003; Jordan-Zachery 2007; Davis 2011), a method (MacKinnon 2013), a framework (Hancock, 2007a; McCall, 2005), a paradigm (Hancock 2007b), a discourse (McKibbin et al. 2015), or a field (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013). I agree with Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall when they state:

If intersectionality is an analytic disposition, a way of thinking about and conducting analyses, then what makes an analysis intersectional is not its use of the term ‘intersectionality,’ nor its being situated in a familiar genealogy, nor its drawing on lists of standard citations. Rather, what makes an analysis intersectional—whatever terms it deploys, whatever its iteration, whatever its field or discipline—is its adoption of an intersectional way of thinking about the problem of sameness and difference and its relation to power. This framing—conceiving of categories not as distinct but as always permeated by other categories, fluidity and changing, always in the process of creating and being created by dynamics of power—emphasizes what intersectionality does rather than what intersectionality is. (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, 795)

Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall (2013, 787-788) list a set of issues about which scholars of intersectionality tend to disagree or in which they follow different approaches and understandings. I find this list rather useful for positioning myself: by determining where my research stands in relation to each of the issues they address, it is possible to show which central questions of intersectional inquiry are relevant to this study and how they are dealt with, while omitting those that are not significant.¹³ I will thus structure my theoretical considerations on intersectionality according to this list and deal with the use of categories, the question of which categories to include, whether or not to focus on privileged positionalities, which layers of society to include, as well on the ontological and epistemological premises of the intersectional approach.

A central question in intersectional approaches is whether different categories are additive or mutually constitutive of each other. In an additive understanding, social inequality is greater when several categories of exclusion add up (Bowleg 2008). In this respect, I follow the view of most intersectional scholars, such as Hancock (2007b, 65; 2016), whereby an

¹³ One debated issue is which metaphor best captures intersectionality –a traffic intersection, a matrix of domination, or a Deleuzian rhizome (Geerts and van der Tuin 2013a; Garry 2011). In this study, I do not use intersectionality in any metaphorical sense, and will thus not engage with this question.

intersectional analysis should be perceived as a dynamic system of co-constitutive relationships in which categories work together. Yet, and this is a relevant distinction, I do not conceive of these as naturally existing categories, which, for example, immigration regulations simply pick up and begin regulating in intersecting ways. Instead, I follow an anti-categorical (McCall 2005, 1776–77) understanding of categories as socially constructed. I am, of course, aware that categories are used for strategic purposes. My main focus is not on how to deconstruct categories, but rather on how such categorizations come about, on what assumptions they are based, who has power over them, and what effect intersecting categorizations have.

Butler contends that, even though performative identities and social categories are constructed discursively and socially, these identities and categories still find corporeal materialization as effects of oppression (Butler 1993, 123). I would take this contention further by claiming that society and the constructions and performance of categories are already corporeal processes.

Another relevant question is which categories to include, an issue that is often referred to as the “embarrassed etc.” (Butler 1999, 182) and found at the end of lists referring to categorical differences. While the most common categories are race, class, gender, and sexuality, the spectrum of categories has grown in the work of some scholars up to 14 or even 20. In my research for this thesis, I did not predefine which categories were relevant to my data. Rather I wanted to see which intersecting categorizations were produced by policymakers, immigration bureaucrats, or legal discourses in order to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable family life. At the same time, I focused especially on certain categorizations such as gender, which features in all four of my publications, and I paid less attention to other categories such as class, which I discuss explicitly only in Publication III and implicitly, by way of the income requirement, in Publication I.

Because the control of migration is so strongly related to different categorizations, such as country of origin/nationality, occupational status, marital status, class, education, and age, one could easily consider intersections of only those categories that are predefined in the analyzed material. But to do so would be to neglect several important questions. If we have those who “are stranger than other others,” as Sara Ahmed puts it (Ahmed 2000, 24), who is Finland’s stranger? What roles do race, religion, and ethnicity play in this context? These are the questions that my intersectional approach to the regulation of family migration pose and endeavor to answer. Another important issue which Jeff Hearn (Hearn 2011) stresses in his consideration of intersectionality is transnationality. In my case, this includes looking at migrants and migrant families from a transnational perspective, but also at the transnational discourses on family migration as described in the introduction to chapter 2.

In my analysis, I found intersecting categories that I had not been looking for. When I began my research on this topic, I did not realize that same-sex

couples' immigration rights had caused such lengthy debates in the Finnish parliament at the end of the 1990s. Thus, sexuality emerged as a category which I did not initially set out to research. After having realized its importance in my analysis of the parliamentary data, I tried to explore queer migration in my other data as well, and in my interviews with immigration officers I asked about the family reunification of same-sex couples. I did not, however, receive any relevant answers other than that same-sex couples' migration is very small in number and that there were no real differences to report in comparison to heterosexual couples' family reunions. This is why I only explore same-sex couples in the context of parliamentary debates, and forego the question in the bureaucratic context.

Another intersection that was more a result of the research than a preconceived theoretical tool was that of race, age, religion, class, and gender. In particular, the relevance of age and the elderly came as a surprise to me, forcing me to re-think the interconnections of inter-generational family ties, racialized processes, and how the Christian faith, gender, and "whiteness" produce certain notions of belonging and worthiness. I had not initially considered these categories because they worked partly as a means of inclusion rather than exclusion of certain subjects. This reflects one of the challenges of an intersectional analysis: to focus not solely on exclusions, but to include positions of advantage in the analysis. As Levine-Rasky shows, studying intersections of dominant positionality shows how oppression exists alongside domination and how oppression and domination can be co-conditional (Levine-Rasky 2011). I agree with Lutz and her co-authors in considering "relations of rule and power differentials as co-constituted and co-constitutive" (Lutz, Vivar, and Supik 2011, 7–8). Nira Yuval-Davis (2014) has introduced the term "situated intersectionality," which tries to avoid the essentialization of social boundaries, an approach that calls for broadening the perspective and avoiding focusing only on the oppressed and marginalized.

In my case, this means focusing not only on exclusions of certain groups of migrants, but also on the intersectional ties of those defining these inclusions and exclusions. What are the political dynamics behind immigration policies? What dominant understandings of the family prevail in Finnish social policies in general, and how do these shape policy solutions for incoming family members? Which intersectional axes of power are at play in political decision-making processes, and how are they linked to (gendered) understandings of sexuality, religion, and family life?

A final question relates to debates over whether intersectional analysis should focus on individuals and their identities or operate more on a structural level. Intersectional theorists argue that intersectionality can and should be carried out across different levels of analysis (Hancock 2007a). These levels are dealt with in the discussion of my research results, particularly at the outset of chapter 5, where I discuss how previously I had conceptualized my different sets of data as different levels, but later came to the conclusion that it is more fruitful to look at gatekeeping processes across analytical and empirical levels.

I do not propose, however, to conflate analytical levels of intersectionality (Yuval-Davis 2006), but rather to emphasize the interconnection of their objects in practice.

Some critical voices point out that intersectionality lacks a profound analysis of power and of the agency of intersectional subjects. Categorization should thus not be seen as totalizing or deterministic, and analysis should preserve the agency of the subjects in question (Geerts and van der Tuin 2013b, 175), as scholars such as Dorthe Staunæs (Staunæs 2003) do. I discuss migrant agency in Publication III, which looks at the way in which transnational couples represent their marriages in order to convince the immigration office and the court that marriage has not been entered into for purposes of immigration. I am not convinced, however, that the inclusion of subject agency is an antidote to totalization. Individualization is, after all, the *modus operandi* of neoliberal politics (Lazzarato 2009).

Post-materialist scholars point out how intersectionality research has neglected the ontological and material aspects of the subjects under study: “Indeed, intersectional theories arose in the intellectual climate of feminist poststructuralism and postmodernism – schools of thought that focused on social constructivism and discursivity and which are currently being criticized for their anti-materialist attitudes” (Geerts and van der Tuin 2013b, 172). This materialist critique is taken up in chapter 5.2., where I discuss the physical reproduction and bodily dependence of elderly family migrants.

I want to conclude my reflections on my use of intersectionality with a quotation from Kathy Davis, which could serve as a blueprint for exploring the possibilities and limits of an intersectional approach to research:

Intersectionality offers endless opportunities for interrogating one’s own blind spots and transforming them into analytic resources for further critical analysis (Davis 2011, 51).

Davis reminds us that good feminist theory should enable us “to be reflexive about the range and limitations of our own theoretical enterprise” (*ibid.*).

According to Alice Ludvig, one of the weaknesses of the intersectional approach is that it often fails to ask who defines which differences are intersecting and which intersections should be given recognition under which circumstances (Ludvig 2006, 247). One challenge that an intersectional approach poses to any research is to keep in mind the interplay of different categories. Another major pitfall is when the researcher merely conveys awareness of intersectional aspects without really using them as tools for analysis (Knapp 2005, 254–55). Nina Lykke warns that intersectionality should not become a pillow on which white scholars can rest their heads without having to consider the power relations implied in their own position, for example, that of a white female scholar in a Scandinavian country (Lykke 2005, 15).

In reflecting on the researcher’s own positionality, which is central to all (feminist) research, reflexivity poses a special kind of challenge to intersectional readings. In addition to reflecting on my own subject position

(see chapter 3.3 for a more thorough discussion), I need to engage with the intersections of feminist scholarship and the theories I use, which, as does most of the dominant feminist scholarly work, still draws mainly on a western, white, and Eurocentric foundation (see, among others, Griffin and Braidotti 2002, 2–8). What does family migration to Finland look like from the perspective of the origin countries? How do scholars in Estonia, Russia, Thailand, and Somalia view the emigration from “their” countries to Finland? And what are the intersectional gender dynamics and processes behind migratory processes in the first place? These perspectives have been silenced both in my own work and in most research on migration to Finland that I have encountered.

2.2 GENDERED AND CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship in the broad sense of the term refers not only to the relationship between the individual and the state (Marshall 1992), but also to relationships between individuals and groups. Feminist citizenship scholars in particular have stressed the need to include the private sphere in citizenship research. I understand citizenship in accordance with those critical studies that focus on the exclusionary tendencies of citizenship for those migrating between nation-states (Lister et al. 2007).

Scholars in migration studies tend to highlight the cultural and social dimensions of citizenship that refer to the conditions of belonging and participation negotiated by societies (Erel 2011; Kofman 2005; Yuval-Davis 2011). In my thesis, I use the concept of “cultural citizenship” (Rosaldo 1994; Vega and Boele van Hensbroek 2010) to explore the cultural conditions by which some family ties grant people the right to belong, while others are excluded and positioned as unwanted (see Publication II). I conceive of intimate citizenship as being part of cultural citizenship in the form of moral struggles over the acceptance of intimate lives.

While intimate citizenship would have been one valid perspective for this thesis and its summary, I found that cultural citizenship grasps the contestations of family better, since in my research results, issues such as children caring for elderly family members featured as a “culture” from which Finnish families could also benefit. Similarly, debates over violence in migrant families were carried out with reference to a violent migrant family culture (see chapter 5.1 for more thorough discussion). Cultural citizenship here also aims to combine feminist debates on the body and care with those of feminist citizenship literature (Beasley and Bacchi 2000). I use cultural citizenship less as an analytical device than as a way of capturing the normative perspective of public debates on citizenship and migrant families.

“To study culture from the political-theoretical concept of citizenship allows us to ask the normative political question: what do the novel national and global constellations in which ‘culture discourse’ functions mean with respect to inclusion and exclusion, participation and marginalisation?” (Vega and Boele van Hensbroek 2010, 246). The way “migrant culture” or “Finnish culture” is constructed is part of the way in which certain family practices and family forms gain acceptance, while others are refused.

As Linda Bosniak points out, citizenship has both an outside and an inside dimension: the outside dimension is about citizenship status and the formal relation to the state, while the inside dimension is concerned with the broader social conditions of belonging and participation mentioned above (Bosniak 2009). I find this duality particularly relevant in exploring family migration (Eggebo 2012). While the entry of non-citizens is a first step toward ultimately acquiring formal citizenship and thus related to a formal understanding of citizenship, the way in which state actors regulate and discuss the life of family migrants is part of the broader understanding of citizenship with which I am concerned in this thesis.

The inside/outside dimension of citizenship is also reflected in recent developments in family migration scholarship. Scholars used to study the “outsider” perspective of family migration, meaning the entrance policies for family migrations, separate from the “inside” perspective, meaning integration policies applying to those already living in the country. As mentioned above, research on family migration has recently begun to reflect the growing trend of “integration at the border.” A reference to certain integration requirements for being granted entry and residency, such as language proficiency or housing arrangements, integration at the border blurs the inside/outside distinction.

Even when a migrant fulfills the requirements of immigration control and is granted legal entry – the first “outside” hurdle on the way to acquiring formal citizenship – bordering processes that exclude certain positionalities of migrants do not end at state borders. Bordering processes have moved from the outskirts of Europe to permeate the everyday lives of migrants in workplaces, schools, and universities. Thus, while debates on gendered and cultural citizenship are one important aspect in analyzing regulations on migration, there is a missing element: the “doer.” The perspective on cultural citizenship and care, which I explore further in chapter 5.2, focuses mostly on the family relation of the migrant, but pays less attention to how and by whom these relations are defined and according to which set of moral understandings of family life. I therefore propose the concept of moral gatekeeping as a means of understanding and conceptualizing the bordering processes at play when a state regulates family migration.

2.3 BORDERING AND GATEKEEPING PROCESSES

Borders are no longer understood only as a spatial demarcation of a state, the geographical area over which a state holds political sovereignty (Wastl-Walter 2011; Paasi 2003). Instead of clear-cut state borders, scholars speak of bordering as a dynamic process (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen 2002; Brambilla 2015). Border policies are part of everyday lives, and bordering takes place by various means of inclusion and exclusion. The ways in which bordering permeates lives are highly dependent on which passport people carry or whether they carry one at all. After someone crosses national state borders, the bordering they experience daily depends on a variety of factors, such as employment, family ties, or nationality, as well as on the type and length of their residence permit. These factors all relate to each other, as certain categories (such as nationality or family affiliations) are used to determine the type of residence permit or whether a permit is issued at all. Immigration control thus creates categories of legal and illegal (Luibhéid 2013), and the governmentality of these categorizations shape migrant's political subjectivities (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013), which is why bordering is an integral part of migrants' lives. And it is not only migrant lives that are affected by bordering processes. Mezzadra and Nielson argue that inclusion and exclusion are not opposing poles, but should be understood as a continuum. They are critical of inclusion being something that has only a positive connotation, because borders establish "multiple points of control" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 7).

When families and their chances to live together are dependent on the categories and the evaluations of migration bureaucracy, the family ties of migrants become, in and of themselves, sites of bordering. My understanding of bordering in relation to family ties matches that of Mezzadra and Neilson, who speak of borders as complex social institutions (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 3). Embedded in these institutions is a web of legal regulations that steer and govern the way in which migrant family life is evaluated. These regulations in turn are permeated with moral understandings of societal norms and practices, while at the same time they are shaping a moral code and defining the borders of acceptable family life.¹⁴

¹⁴ In research on family migration, these normative frameworks feature in a variety of studies that take a similar approach without labeling it as moral gatekeeping. Scholars have shown how family reunification policies participate in constructing narratives of national belonging through racial and cultural othering, mostly built on hetero-normative assumptions of migrant family relations (Schmidt 2011; Myrdahl 2010; Razack 2004; Luibhéid 2013; Luibhéid 2002). Gendered understandings of migrant family life play a central role in the moral conceptions underlying immigration policies and policy debates (Bonjour and de Hart 2013; Hart 2007; Kofman, Saharso, and Vacchelli 2015; Kraler et al. 2011; Palriwala and Uberoi 2008; Walsum 2008).

I call this dual process of shaping and being shaped by moral understandings of family life moral gatekeeping, following Helena Wray's conceptualization. Wray (Wray 2006; Wray 2015) uses the concept in her work on marriage migration in Great Britain and shows how detecting sham marriages permits moral gatekeeping, a process in which ideas of what a marriage is and should be are used to protect "the cultural and moral heart of the nation" (Wray 2015, 142).

I understand moral gatekeeping as embedded in the bordering processes that I described earlier. Gatekeeping as a concept has its origins in studies of how the media filter what is newsworthy (Shoemaker and Vos 2009). In migration studies, gatekeepers are those who decide whether or not a state border can be crossed or whether a residence permit is issued. They are the ones who implement migration policies and regulations. Iacovetta (Iacovetta 2006, xii) adopts a wider definition by which gatekeeping covers the entire multitude of reception, citizenship, and regulatory activities related to immigration.

This thesis follows the broad conceptualization of gatekeeping which grasps the normative aspects of immigration regulations (Iacovetta 2006; Lee 2006; Nevins 2002; Satzewich 2014; Triandafyllidou and Ambrosini 2011; Wray 2011). As Bache argues, "it makes sense to refer to an extended gatekeeper that can operate at all stages of the policy process, including implementation" (Bache 1999, 42).

Moral gatekeeping as a theoretical concept includes several elements that require further elaboration and conceptualization. First, the moral part of moral gatekeeping needs clarification. I was asked in a seminar by a fellow Ph.D. student whether moral gatekeeping means that the gatekeeping process itself is moral (or immoral). Am I making a judgment about the morality of the way in which gatekeeping takes place (a moral kind of gatekeeping)? Or do I refer to the moral understandings being "kept" by the gatekeeper, whereby a certain set of moral convictions (rather than the gate) is being preserved (a gatekeeping of morals)? As I pondered this question, I came to realize that there is a third way of reading this concept. Moral gatekeeping can also refer to the fact that moral understandings of a certain matter (in my case, family relations in the context of migration) become part of the gatekeeping processes. This would be moral+gatekeeping=moral gatekeeping, not "a moral kind of gatekeeping" or "a gatekeeping of morals."

Having established how the words moral and gatekeeping relate to each other, we next need to look at them separately. What do I mean by moral, and what do I mean by gatekeeping? Moral is defined in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* as "of or relating to principles of right and wrong in behavior." In my analysis, there were clear-cut definitions of what was "right" behavior in a marriage/family, and what was wrong, which is why I find the expression "moral" rather suitable in this context. In the debates on same-sex marriage, the dominant discourse condemned queer family reunification as morally wrong. In debates on victimization, the moral questions concerned violence

against migrant women, forced marriage, and the treatment of children and the elderly. In a vein similar to what Helena Wray describes, the assessment of “real” marriages also depends on understandings of right or wrong ways to live or to enter into matrimony. All of these questions bring out clear-cut understandings of right and wrong (see chapter 5.1 for further discussion), which is why “moral” is well suited to describe the gatekeeping process at play when restrictions on migration are called for in using these moral justifications.

In the last part of my theoretical consideration of moral gatekeeping, I want to explore the metaphors of a gate, as well as that of a keeper in the idea of gatekeeping. It is worth bearing in mind that the construction of the gates is influenced by understandings of what ought to be kept outside and what should stay within, which resonates with Mezzadra and Neilsen’s conceptualization of the continuum of inclusion and exclusion.

Once a gate is created, it becomes so self-evident that it is almost invisible. The concept of gatekeeping focuses more on the keeping than on the gate. Certain normative understandings of family life are arguably what gatekeeping processes endeavor to protect. Through such processes, these understandings are protected from outside influences that could change them. At the end of the 1990s, same-sex marriages and later Muslim marriages and families threatened understandings of the “Finnish” family that gatekeeping endeavored to protect. Thus, we actually have two of the three ways of understanding moral gatekeeping at play, namely, moral+gatekeeping=moral gatekeeping, as well as the gatekeeping of morals. While moral+gatekeeping stresses the regulation of migration as a process of exclusion (which could be understood as the process by which the migrant is literally kept outside the gates of the nation-state), the gatekeeping of morals is more closely connected with discourses about migrant families and the co-existence of different kinds of family life, tying into the debates on cultural citizenship explored in chapter 2.2.

A process of gatekeeping that I do not analyze at length in my publications, but which still merits mention is that of economic gatekeeping. While moral gatekeeping selects migrant families worthy of being granted a residence permit according to moral understandings of what kind of family life is acceptable, economic gatekeeping selects migrants according to their socio-economic background. My discussion of the income requirement stresses how, in this process, upholding or establishing family ties across national borders is becoming a privilege of the wealthy (see Publication I as well as chapter 5.1). While moral gatekeeping is the process of excluding certain family forms that are represented as unacceptable, economic gatekeeping might have the same effects, but uses the argument of protecting the public expenses of the welfare state, a process also called welfare chauvinism (Keskinen, Norocel, and Jørgensen 2016). Moral gatekeeping embeds considerations of right and wrong in processes of exclusion and inclusion, and thus operates on the level of moral, rather than economic, values. Linked to both moral and economic

values are notions of the welfare state. In the next section, I will explore how the welfare state can be conceived of from a postcolonial perspective, which is the starting point of my analysis.

2.4 FEMINIST WELFARE STATE RESEARCH AND NORDIC POSTCOLONIALISM

“In terms of colonial history, the Nordic countries manifest all variations of experience from colonizing powers, to colonies themselves.” (Loftsdottir and Jensen 2012)

“North-European countries have taken, and continue to take, part in (post) colonial processes.” (Mulinari et al. 2009, 1)

While colonial histories and the way they shape European societies today are being studied extensively in other parts of Europe, the Nordic countries have often been a blank spot on the postcolonial scholarly map. Yet as postcolonial scholars show, the Nordic countries have taken part and are taking part in colonial processes. The concept of colonial complicity is defined by Mulinari and colleagues as referring “to processes in which (post) colonial imageries, practices and products are made to be part of what is understood as the ‘national’ and ‘traditional’ culture of the Nordic countries” (Mulinari et al. 2009, 1–2). There are three ways in which my work is analytically linked to and benefits from a postcolonial perspective: first, it is historically sensitive; second, it explores nation building and national identity; and third, it explores the welfare state. I will tackle each of these analytical perspectives below and explore how and why they are relevant to my analysis of the regulation of family migration in Finland.

Finnish discourses, policies, and practices in the regulation of family migration are shaped by historical layers (Koselleck 2003). A postcolonial perspective is sensitive to historical legacies of colonialism and the way such legacies are found in present-day regulations. Here, the (post)colonial perspective helps to avoid treating current understandings and public political discourses as being in an ahistorical vacuum, and it challenges the researcher to situate these matters both transnationally and historically. In exploring how certain migrants are more desirable for family reunification in Finland than others and in discussing the hierarchies of exclusion and inclusion in Finnish policies and practices, it is vital to link these hierarchies to racialized colonial practices in Finland as well as in other countries. At the same time, it is important to explore critically the “Nordic” region and how also the history of the Nordic countries is a product of conflicted relationships and shifting power relations (Loftsdottir and Jensen 2012, 4).

Postcolonial research is critical of the way in which “. . . the interwoven racial, gendered and nationalistic ideologies originating from the colonial project have formed a part of contemporary Nordic identities” (Loftsdottir and Jensen 2012, 2). Thus, a postcolonial perspective on Nordic welfare states also

addresses the way nation and national identity construction is tied to images of the “other.” Here, identity formation reinforces distinctions between the nation and its others, namely, immigrants. When the Finnish state encounters migrant others who seek to move to Finland because of family ties, the state is creating an understanding of Finnish family norms constructed against the migrant other. At the same time, some of these norms might not be framed as Finnish, but rather are part of what is called a “western” or “European” understanding of family life. Finland thus participates in constructions of nationhood and national belonging by defining the family lives and the prospective family members who can become part of the nation in the way it recognizes marriage or other family ties as the basis for a residence permit.

Postcolonialism is also closely linked to post-socialism, and Mulinari and her co-authors (Mulinari et al. 2009) stress how central and eastern Europe figure as dependent others in a way that is similar to the Orient and Africa during the colonial period. Finland offers a particularly fruitful case in this regard, as Finland and Finnish identity building have been dominated by the struggle between “East” and “West.” Russians form the biggest group of immigrants seeking residence permits in Finland (Maahanmuuttovirasto 2012), and the majority of marriage migrants in Finland are Russian. Thus, it is not surprising that in the cases I analyze, Russian migrants feature prominently, as they do in the case of the elderly marriage migrants in Publication III or the Russian grandmother reported in Publication II.

Welfare state politics are constitutive of and constituted by intersecting unequal relations. Just as in the work of Mulinari and her co-authors, my research also is trying to “expand understandings of the diverse ways in which Nordic welfare states and their institutions construct families, gender(s) and nationhood” (Mulinari et al. 2009, 5). In addition to being sensitive to these constructions, postcolonial research explores racialization processes. These are particularly relevant in studying state policies that do not seem to carry an explicit racial bias, yet still racialize migrants through categorizations and exclusions that mark the unwanted “other.” Pedersen (Pedersen 2012, 141) shows in her analysis of the application process for marriage migrants in Denmark how “race privileges may present as unarticulated and qualifying norms in the application process.”

I use a concept of race that is common in feminist and postcolonial scholarship. In Europe and in Germany in particular, there is the tendency not to use the word race or *Rasse*. Here, the idea seems to be that referring to race as a category stabilizes the pseudo-scientific notion of different biological races (Barskanmaz 2001). The segregation of people into a hierarchical system of biological races was influential from the end of the nineteenth century until the end of World War II, and has played a crucial role in the history of racial segregation in the United States, Nazi Germany, and the South African apartheid system (Puuronen 2011, 11). Scholars critical of the term “race” tend to substitute ethnicity (for a longer discussion on the concepts of ethnicity and race, see Bös 2005). This sees race as an analytical category which is important

for researching and understanding processes of racism (Ahmed 2004; Puuronen 2011; Vuolajärvi 2014). As Sara Ahmed puts it, “[r]ace exists as an effect of histories of racism as histories of the present” (Ahmed 2004, 48). Thus, speaking of race does not produce or reinscribe racist structures and practices, but makes them visible and makes it possible to analyze them critically.

A feminist postcolonial perspective offers the opportunity to explore processes of inclusion and exclusion, identity building, and gendered racialized norms in welfare state institutions. This study seeks to contribute to this strand of research by offering a critical intersectional perspective on the racialized hierarchies of exclusion and identity building that are part of the way that Finland regulates family migration.

Calls for restrictions on certain groups of family migrants are often embedded in discourses on gender equality, which can also be seen as a normative yardstick used by the Nordic countries. These are creating dichotomies between perceptions of liberated Nordic women and of oppressed women in migrant families. These dichotomies and how they are related to what I call “moral gatekeeping” relate to understandings of cultural citizenship.

Thus, to sum up my theoretical approach, I am looking at the way in which certain categories are constructed and contested by using an intersectional perspective, and I understand intersectionality as an analytical tool to examine how constructed categories mutually reinforce each other and create axes of inclusion and exclusion. These categorizations relate to struggles of cultural citizenship, which I define as conditions in which some family ties grant people the right to belong, while other people are excluded and positioned as unwanted. I conceptualize these struggles as gatekeeping processes, and I differentiate the concepts of moral gatekeeping as moral+gatekeeping, the gatekeeping of morals, and economic gatekeeping. These processes are understood as part of the bordering processes, and in analyzing them, I use a transnational outlook on how the nation-state is reinscribed and defined through exclusionary discourses and problem frames. The next chapter explains how this is done and with what kinds of data.

3 DATA AND METHODS

In this chapter, I will introduce the different sets of data that I used and analyzed in the articles. This is an important part of presenting and evaluating my research results, because “[q]ualitative methods, like their quantitative cousins, can be systematically evaluated only if their canons and procedures are made explicit” (Corbin and Strauss 1990, 3). Thus, I will explain how I collected my data, how I was granted access to it, over what time period it was collected, and all other relevant information. I will then reflect on my positionality as a researcher and consider how this influenced my fieldwork and other data collection, as well as the analysis derived from it. I will explicate the ways in which my positionality might have influenced the perceptions of the people and issues I am studying. As part of these reflections, I will also consider any ethical issues related to this research. In the last subchapter, I explain my methodological choices, exploring some general thoughts on my methodology, after which I give a more detailed account of the methods used in each of the four publications.

3.1 PARLIAMENTARY MINUTES, EDITORIALS, AND COURT CASES

Finland, like all Nordic countries, is a state-centric society where laws and parliament play a more central role in shaping public discourse than in societies that are more critical of state institutions (Alapuro 2010). Parliamentary data therefore provide important insights into how family migration is regulated and discussed. One could, of course, argue that parliamentary plenary debates do not have too much political relevance, because the real political decision-making takes place behind the closed doors of committees. Yet I chose to focus on this rather public arena of policymaking, and I use the data in two of the four publications (I and II) for this thesis. Parliamentary speeches have a rather special nature. They consist not only of politicians talking to each other, but also of their speech acts in trying to influence the drafting of a law and how potential voters are addressed (Raevaara 2005, 52). Thus, despite the lack of political weight, parliamentary speech reveals how politicians want to present themselves and their parties and how they expect their voters to think. Still, their claims and speech acts carry political weight insofar as they influence the way a law proposal is voted on.

When I began my research, I set out to see how family migration has been regulated in Finland since the fall of the Iron Curtain. I read through all of the parliamentary material on migration and the family since 1989. Because parliamentary records before 1991 are not digitalized, I went through the

printed minutes of parliamentary plenary debates related to the preparation and passing of Finland's Aliens Act in 1991. For the rest of the material, I searched the Eduskunta (the Finnish name for the parliament) database for all debates on immigration (*maahanmuutto*) and material on the Aliens Act (*ulkomaalaislaki*) and the Integration Act (*kotouttamislaki*). Then I searched all the minutes I could find for keywords such as *perhe* (family), *avioliitto* (marriage), *lapset* (children), *avoliitto* (co-habitation), and *perheenyhdistäminen* (family reunification). Ultimately, I gathered a great deal of material, essentially consisting of all parliamentary data on migration and the family for more than 20 years. Naturally, not all of this it made it into the analysis for the final publication of the thesis. I ended up with 22 folders, each of which comprised of a set of documents related to a committee report, a bill, or a motion related to the Aliens Act. In Finland, each piece of legislation is first presented to Parliament, then it is sent to committees, which hear experts and draft reports on the bill in question; then the bill is publicly discussed in two parliamentary hearings before any amendment to the law or new piece of legislation is voted on. In the debate on same-sex family reunion, which I analyze in Publication I and in chapter 5.2 of this summary, almost all parliamentary hearings dealt with same-sex partner migration, while other parts of the bill were not discussed at all.

Looking through several hundred pages of parliamentary debates and committee reports provided a solid understanding of Finnish policies and legislation on migration in general and on the development of the debates on family and migration in particular, despite the fact that only parts of the material made it into the final analyses in the publications. It is noteworthy, for example, that family relations of migrants were not of great political interest at the beginning of the 1990s, and that only at the end of the 1990s did they begin to be further regulated and debated in parliament, which is why I start the analysis of parliamentary plenary debates for both Publications I and II with the year 1999.

Another perspective on parliamentary plenary debates is that they provide a discursive arena for those who do not necessarily have a great deal of political power. In the particular debates on the topic with which this thesis deals, individual parliamentarians who were known for their provocative comments and anti-immigration sentiments often dominated. These individuals did not always reflect the official position of their respective parties, and as I observe in Publications I and II, it is difficult to draw clear political lines between the government position and the opposition, even within political parties. The reason is that on many issues, the parties were internally divided, at least on the level of political discourse (I did not control for the way in which these discourses and the parliamentarians' voting behaviors corresponded, which would have been an interesting perspective had all the publications dealt only with the Finnish parliament and political decision-making).

Publication I analyzes only parliamentary speech, while the empirical analysis in Publication II focuses on two comparably prestigious forums of

public discussion in Finland: the Parliament and Finland's largest daily newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat* (HS). This publication is co-authored with Dr. Karina Horsti, Senior Lecturer and Academy of Finland Fellow at the University of Jyväskylä. In addition to the parliamentary minutes, the research material for Publication II consists of editorials in HS that deal with family and migration between 1999 and 2010. Both forums are conventional and institutionalized genres of the national public sphere in which certain stakeholders select the issues to be raised in public debate. These "privileged discursive sites" (Kantola 2006, 44) provide reasoned and explicit views on current affairs with high agenda-setting value, making them comparable arenas for analysis. Although these sets of data do not cover the full spectrum of public and political debates, they do allow us to analyze debates that powerfully suggest frames for how family migration is thought of and talked about. As I explained above, the first part of the data, parliamentary plenary debates, functions as a way to display publicly a party's or a politician's stand on a certain issue. The second part of the data, namely, the HS editorials, which are analyzed in Publication II, has a strong agenda-setting value. Unsigned editorials are official expressions that shape the identity of the newspaper in the media system and society (McNair 2011, 70). Furthermore, editorials are intended to be interventions in political debate and policymaking. They therefore have a different orientation than many other journalistic genres, such as news (McNair 2011). These editorials are read on average by 712,000 people, about 13 percent of the Finnish population. However, as a newspaper with nationwide distribution, *Helsingin Sanomat* holds a hegemonic position in Finland's public debate well beyond its readership. Thirty-four unsigned editorials were collected for the research corpus plus five signed editorial columns, all from the HS Archive, by searching all materials between 1999 and 2010 using the keywords "family [*perhe*]" AND "migration [*maahanmuutto*]." For the parliamentary plenary materials, all plenary sessions that dealt with amendments to the Aliens Act or the implementation of the Act were searched and then narrowed down to the ones that featured the keywords "family [*perhe*]" AND "migration [*maahanmuutto*]." A total of 20 parliamentary plenary debates was analyzed.

Although Karina Horsti and I did the actual writing and analyzing of the data together, we divided the work in terms of data collection: Karina Horsti compiled the data from HS into one file, while I was responsible for collecting and compiling the data from the parliamentary debates. The first steps of our analysis, in which we thematically coded and organized our material in order to identify problem frames (see 3.3), were carried out by each of us for our own data sets separately, while the final analysis of our data was done together, with both of us having access to both sets of data.

The third set of written data that I analyze in this thesis consists of cases from the Helsinki Administrative Court. The main body of source material is composed of cases from the years 2000 and 2005 involving non-EU/EEA citizens whose residence permit applications based on marriage to a Finnish

citizen were refused by the Finnish Immigration Service (FIS), a decision that was then appealed to the Helsinki Administrative Court. If a foreign citizen receives a negative decision from the FIS on her or his residence permit application, she or he may appeal to an administrative court. There are eight administrative courts in Finland. In the first decade of the 2000s, the majority (around 70–80%) of cases within the category “alien affairs” (*ulkomaalaisasiat*) were processed at the Helsinki Administrative Court. The rejection rate at the Helsinki Administrative Court of Appeals for family reunification cases fluctuated between 50 and 68 percent between 2001 and 2010 (Statistics Finland 2011). After receiving a rejection, a foreign citizen may still appeal to the Supreme Administrative Court. If the Administrative Court overturns the Service’s decision, the case is sent back to the FIS for new processing.

The analysis of the court cases was done with Dr. Johanna Leinonen, research coordinator at the John Morton Center for North American Studies at the University of Turku, who originally collected the data for another project, but had not been able to analyze it. The material fit the perspective of this thesis so well that we decided to work together. Leinonen collected the cases at the archive of the Helsinki Administrative Court with the help of an Administrative Court information specialist using the keywords “residence permit [*oleskelulupa*],” “marriage [*avioliitto*],” and “Finnish citizen [*suomen kansalainen*].” In the year 2000, 87 appeals were found using those combined search words; for the year 2005, 130 appeals were found. The years were chosen in order to see whether the new Aliens Act of 2004 had affected court decisions and whether any changes had taken place, but we were unable to determine significant differences related to the law.

In both years, there were more foreign men than women among the appellants: in 2000, about 63 percent of the appeals were submitted by a foreign man (or on behalf of a foreign man), while in 2005 about 75 percent were from foreign men or on their behalf. The nationalities most frequently represented among the appellants were Russians, Turks, and Nigerians in 2000 and Turks, Moroccans, and Russians in 2005. While the appealing parties from Turkey, Nigeria, and Morocco were predominantly male, the majority of Russian appellants were women. These differences in gender distribution reflect the general patterns of marriage migration to Finland. Of these groups, Turkish and Nigerian men had lower rates of acceptance into Finland than the average male applicant, while Moroccan men and Russian women had higher than average acceptance rates (Publication III). Not all court files contained the same documents, but their compositions varied: most often the file contained only the court’s decision, with summaries of the appellant’s plea and the earlier decision of the Finnish Immigration Service or, in some cases, the Jurisdictional District of the Helsinki Police Department. Sometimes the file included other materials, such as the original Finnish Immigration Service decision or supporting documents provided by the appellant(s), such as letters and other personal statements.

Although analysis of the court files requires a research permit, they are rather easy to access, which is unusual by international comparisons. Thus, this set of data is rather unique and provides detailed insight into the way in which family relations are evaluated by Finnish immigration officers and by the Helsinki Administrative Court.

The Court granted research permission to me as well, and I was allowed to examine and analyze the case files myself. Johanna Leinonen and I divided the files between us, so that I read and coded one half of them, and she read and coded the other half. The appellants' names, birth dates, and other personal records appear in these files. It is therefore crucial to prohibit general access to ensure the anonymity of those involved. In Publication III, we used aliases for the people in question, while making sure that the name reflected the person's nationality and gender.

Neither Johanna Leinonen nor I had trained as a legal scholar. Our analysis of the court files was therefore not concerned with the full scale of legal implications and interpretations. Our methodological approach was based on the idea that legal texts can, after all, be analyzed as such. Still, the text of a court case differs from interview data. Meanings, implications, and interpretations in legal texts always have legal consequences, while the discursive power implications of other speech acts tend to be less direct.

3.2 INTERVIEW DATA

Interviews offer perspectives on issues that written material overlooks. I felt that it was not enough to analyze the Aliens Act, the court cases, the media, and the parliamentary minutes. Most of these materials are rather normative. They define the guidelines for family reunification (Aliens Act/court cases) or debate whether these guidelines should be changed and how (parliamentary plenary sessions and media discussions).

When I set out to do the interviews, I thought that they would reveal the "truth" of what bureaucrats think about migrant families. I was eager to hear how family life is defined and what it feels like to separate or reunite loved ones, and I wanted to know how the implementation of the Aliens Act works on the ground.

Of course, I was not so naïve as to take the words of the interviewees at face value. I was aware that individuals disclose only the information they want to, that they are bound by loyalty to their employer, that it is their duty to follow legal regulations, and that they are probably not very critical of these regulations. Thus, I knew that it would be difficult to find out about the more controversial and challenging aspects of their work. Yet I was not prepared for how guarded the immigration and police officers would be.

Some researchers in other countries have managed to observe the work of immigration bureaucrats over longer periods of time (Satzewich 2015; Eule 2014; Lavanchy 2014). If I were an anthropologist for whom fieldwork

constitutes the heart of the research data, I might have dug deeper, applied for a research permit that allows broader access, and perhaps do something similar in Finland. For purposes of this thesis, however, interviews with the bureaucrats who decide on residence permits seemed sufficient, as these individuals gave me insight into the meanings that they attached to migration and family. It soon became clear that access to bureaucrats working in migration regulation was limited. Given that I conceptualize the regulation of migration as a gatekeeping process, it is rather ironic that when I tried to get in touch with the gatekeepers, gatekeeping was what I encountered.

For qualitative research methods, the validity and reliability of the data are not measurable in graphs and numbers as are quantitative data. An essential aspect of qualitative research is to be clear about how the data were obtained, which is why I will presently describe how I gained access to my informants and give details about the number, length, and place of the interviews.

I was not able to contact the staff of the Immigration Office directly to ask them to participate. After having been granted a research permit, I learned that my request was forwarded to the head of a unit that deals with, among other things, residence permits on the basis of family ties. This person decided who would be invited to participate in my research. I was not able to contact all of the staff members myself, but had to rely on this unit head to forward my requests. Nor did I have direct access to retired staff members. Apparently, the retirees meet on a regular basis, and my call for interviewees once again was forwarded through an employee. When I asked whether I could contact the staff directly or whether I could participate in a meeting of retired employees, my contact person said no, explaining that recently, there had been quite a number of requests for interviews. Thus, I had the impression that the authorities were not overly eager to participate in yet another research project.

I conducted eight semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996) between March 2012 and June 2013 with members of the Finnish police and the Finnish Immigration Service, where I interviewed two female bureaucrats. One had been working with the service since the mid-1990s, and the other, since the beginning of the millennium. The interviews were conducted in the employees' offices. I also interviewed a female retiree who had worked for about 15 years at the Finnish Immigration Service (although in her time it was known as Aliens' Centre, and since 1995, Directorate of Immigration), and a male Finnish Immigration Service retiree whose experience in dealing with residence permits went back to the mid-1970s. Both of these interviews were conducted at Helsinki University. My other interviewees included a man who has been in a leading position with the Immigration Police of a large Finnish city since the mid-1990s; two current female employees of the same department, whom I interviewed together in one of the employees' offices; and two currently employed female police officers in the police department of one of the biggest Finnish cities, also interviewed in their offices. The interviews lasted between one and two hours. I coded the transcribed interviews in the Atlas.ti system for qualitative data analysis.

The interviews were semi-structured. I used a set of themes and questions for every interview. I formulated the questions as a backup and reminder for myself which themes to cover. I learned from previous experience in conducting interviews that sticking too closely to the questions is one of the main pitfalls for the inexperienced interviewer; instead, I tried to keep the tone conversational rather than pose questions that needed answers.

3.3 POSITIONALITY, ETHICS, AND PRECONCEPTIONS

Reflections on fieldwork and the positionality of the researcher are central elements in qualitative research methods. These include reflections on awkwardness and other aspects of fieldwork, which strongly influence the research outcome (Hume and Mulcock 2004; Cook and Fonow 1986). While this holds true for all methods of collecting data, it becomes most crucial when the researcher is herself interacting with her informants, as is done in interviews and other forms of ethnographic fieldwork (Davies 2008; Fingeroos 2003). Thus, while preconceptions, ethics and my role as a researcher are relevant for my other data as well, I will in the following focus particularly on the interviews at the immigration office and police offices. In the following section, I revisit the notes that I kept during fieldwork. I will also analyze and reflect on the way I conceptualize my fieldwork today.

I remember when I walked into the Immigration Office to conduct my first interview. I sat in the lobby, waiting for my contact person to pick me up. I looked at a bulletin board near the entrance for those who come there as “customers,” with pictures of smiling children and advertisements of several NGOs. I noticed that the person behind the counter was not very friendly to the people who came in. When I told him who I was and what the purpose of my visit was, his attitude changed considerably. I was greeted in a very friendly manner: he stepped out of his booth to open another door to the right, a door to which people who come there in order to leave applications or tend to other matters do not have access. While sitting in that spacious lobby, I thought about the racialized dividing line and how in the area I had just entered, everyone I met was white. On the other side of the corridor were those who were visibly racialized by skin color; even when they were white, the physical space they were in made clear that they were “others,” those whose presence was not self-evident and who needed to provide proof in the form of various documents that they had the right to be in Finland.

I could not help feeling uneasy about this situation and the privileges that I had, and about the fact that there is a system that divides people according to their national origin, the color of their skin, and their socio-economic status. I felt like running to the other side of the corridor, away from that big spacious lobby in which I was waiting, burst through the locked door to the side where people sat in a small waiting room, and say, “I’m on your side! I am not one of

them!” And I remember realizing at the same time that I was one of them. All of the sympathy and empathy in the world could not erase my privileged position. It could not be erased, and I could not do away with it. In writing this, I am acutely aware of the problematic discourses of white scholars’ guilt feelings about their privileged position (Haggis and Schech 2000). I am not saying that I feel sorry for myself. I am merely acknowledging that race and my whiteness are central elements in the power relations that are relevant in conducting interviews or doing any other kind of research, and I felt uneasy about this in setting out to do my fieldwork.

I also became aware of the way in which the whole setup of the immigration office was related to gatekeeping. The first entrance I tried was closed. The entrance that I then passed through was the same that all people who come to that office would walk through. The man in the glass booth had the power to decide whether or not an individual would be allowed to enter the locked door to the right, and by opening the door, and making me wait to be picked up, it was clear that I was experiencing a gatekeeping of the gatekeepers – so the gates to those who act as gatekeepers in the implementation of Finnish migration policy were closely guarded by other gatekeepers. I had been granted entry, but as I was soon to find out, the gatekeeping did not end once I had been admitted through the gate.

And as soon as I stepped into the office of my first interviewee, there it was: the strange feeling that the woman I was interviewing was not at all what I expected her to be. Knowing the Finnish Immigration Service previously mainly from the news, from comments by the head of the Immigration Service, and from the negative decisions on residence permits that I saw in the case files I analyzed, my image of the organization was not a rosy one. I had conceptualized a racist institution that endeavors to keep as many people out of Finland as possible. Clearly, the staff member I interviewed did not correspond to this image. The pictures of her children on the wall could have been hanging in my office – her children were only a little older than mine. She was smart, friendly, educated, and did not say anything racist or express the biased views that I had expected. The same experience was repeated with the other staff members I interviewed at the Immigration Office.

In an article about feminist elite interviewing, Kezar writes:

The interviewer should be encouraged to reflect on his or her own privilege because most faculty come from middle- or upper-middle-class backgrounds and are still predominantly white. This privilege may facilitate connection with the elites interviewed and could help the researcher see them as similar to self and not “other.”(Kezar 2003, 405–6)

In Kezar’s view, this would help the interview, but I clearly remember how confused I was about this matter. I reflected on my privilege, but I was still expecting to encounter people very different from myself, and that expectation

did not help me build a connection. On the contrary, the similarities to myself, the fact that they were young women, educated and eloquent with children, confused me. As a researcher with an anti-racist and feminist agenda, I found it unthinkable as well as undesirable to believe there could be any connections or similarities between myself and the bureaucrats I interviewed. This clash between negative preconceptions and the actual encounter with the bureaucrat in question does not seem to be uncommon; both Åsa Wettergren and Helga Eggebø describe similar issues when they interviewed immigration bureaucrats in Sweden and Norway (Wettergren 2010; Eggebø 2012).

During the interview, I was at pains to understand this strange similarity between myself and the interviewees. I remember how, on my way home, I went through different scenarios in my mind. My first instinct was to blame the gatekeepers at the Immigration Office. As the interviewees were picked and chosen for me, had the authorities taken all the racists who make terrible decisions and hide them in a backroom so that I would not be able to see them, write about them, or interview them? Or, and this was my second theory, was it in fact not people themselves who were working against incoming migrants, but rather the workings of the law and the organization that made for unjust decisions, the terrible deportations that tore families apart, the racist statements in the media? Perhaps I was not dealing with racist people, but with racist laws and institutions? (I had assumed that both the people and the institutions were racist in a mutually reinforcing way.)

Then there was my third theory: Since they asked who would like to participate in this research, was it only the more liberal and open-minded who agreed to such an interview, the ones who wanted to help promote research on family migration in Finland, and had this influenced the selection of informants? In other words, was I speaking to those who were more like me, because only they were the ones willing to speak to me?

Now, after reflecting on these questions for several years, I came to the conclusion that the answer is a combination of all three theories, which are not mutually exclusive. But there are also other dimensions that I did not consider on my way home from those first interviews. In relation to the first theory, I realized that I did not know enough about the people working at the Immigration Office, about their political or personal opinions. During the research process, I have met international researchers who, like me, are highly critical of immigration regulations in general and of the workings of immigration offices in particular, but who have nevertheless worked at their national immigration offices themselves. After all, disciplines like political science and political history have a central role in educating state bureaucrats. Thus, the people I interviewed and I might in fact have more in common than I was initially ready to admit. Recently, I found out that a person who I know to be a strong proponent of migrant rights, politically rather left and critical, started working at the Immigration Office. Perhaps, then, it was not only a question of hiding the racists in the backroom, but also that it is not

uncommon for people with rather progressive opinions to work at institutions that regulate migration.

As for the second theory, namely, that it is not the people, but the institution and the law that are to blame, I have come to realize over the years that racist exclusion and participating in hierarchies that are built on racialized systems and laws are not less problematic when the persons implementing them are critical of them. As Robert Blauner stated in 1972 in theorizing institutional racism, “contingencies of social position, of institutional role are more significant than an individual attitude or person in determining those actions and decisions that make a difference with respect of racial realities.” (Blauner 1972, 188)

This resembles my thoughts on the privilege of whiteness: it does not make any racialized person less excluded if I myself am aware of racial hierarchies and am critical of those hierarchies. Even if the person at the Immigration Office does not believe that all migrants are a potential burden on the Finnish welfare state and has a welcoming attitude towards migrants, Finland still has a restrictive migration policy that is being further tightened and which bureaucrats have to implement as the law. Of course, and this is one of the questions that motivated my research in the first place, the person dealing with the cases does have a fair amount of leeway, and as is clear in my publications, particularly Publication III in which I analyze court cases, the criteria for evaluating family ties are rather arbitrary. Thus, the bureaucrat’s judgment is highly relevant for the outcome of a case, which in turn is certainly affected by personal preconceptions about the issue at hand.

My third theory – that my interview sample only included those who have a more liberal view of migration issues – proved to be wrong: I also interviewed people who had rather negative opinions about certain nationalities and connected them with a higher likelihood of committing marriage fraud, and they held rather prejudiced views. This was particularly the case with retired interviewees. I do not know if this was because the retirees actually had more negative opinions about migrants than their younger colleagues or whether they were just less restricted by obligations to the employer than those still working at the Immigration Service.¹⁵

¹⁵ There are controversial views on the workings of the Finnish Immigration Service. In a book written by journalist Jussi Förbom, the Immigration Service is harshly criticized. The Finnish Immigration service is seen as wanting to deliberately tighten their practices. He speaks of “erosion” to describe the way in which legislation becomes stricter due to the workings of the Finnish Immigration Service. A certain implementation of a law leads, according to Förbom, to a certain understanding on how strict certain laws can or should be, and thus influences future legislation (Förbom 2016, 203). Outi Fingeroos has done research on the Immigration Service in connection to family reunification and disagrees with Förbom – in her view, the staff only implements the law and is not such an independent actor as Förbom describes (Fingeroos 2016, 79-80).

Another question relevant to the interaction of interviewer and interviewee is that of the interviewer's biases toward the people she is interviewing. These biases may affect the outcome of the interview and are thus relevant in evaluating a particular set of data (Kleinman and Klopp 1993; Kezar 2003; Dexter 2006).

It is clear that interviewees sometimes try to envision what the interviewer wants to hear and adjust their answers accordingly. In my case, I constantly had difficulty with wanting and needing to be honest about my research and its aims, which I had made explicit in my call for participants. And yet I kept assuming that I was taking a much more critical stance toward the policies and implementation of family reunification than my interviewees were aware of. I was uneasy about whether or not my not telling them how critical I am was being dishonest. At the same time, I did not want to criticize them openly for their work or make them feel defensive about their work and the choices they have to make. Personal and political biases aside, I was truly interested in the way in which these decisions are made and in the problems with which bureaucrats struggle. In retrospect, perhaps it would have been revealing to consider our preconceptions of each other as part of the interview. If the interviews had been longer, this might have even been feasible, but as they only lasted 1-2 hours and provided the data for one out of four articles, I decided not to give any consideration to our preconceptions of each other.

In terms of research ethics, I obtained informed consent from all participants, and they all received my call for interviewees in which I described the aim of the research. In accordance with the guidelines of the Finnish Social Science Archive (Ketola et al. 2016), the research plan submitted with the application for research permission included a data management plan. This stated that the interview transcripts would be read only by me and by my research assistant, who transcribed the interviews. In addition, interviewee names would be anonymized, and audio recordings would be deleted after the study was finished. This information about data management was also given to the interviewees. All those who agreed to take part in this research participated voluntarily. Because Finland's population is quite small, I took special care that my interviewees could not be identified (on the ethical implications and importance of anonymity, see Hallamaa et al. 2006). Even if their names did not appear in the research, the Finnish Social Science Archive gives guidelines on so-called indirect identifiers, which ". . . are the kind of information which, when linked with other available information sources, could identify someone. For example, age, gender, municipality of residence, or a rare job title may in some cases, when combined with other information, enable identification" (Ketola et al. 2016).

In my publications, I refer to them by interview numbers, not by name. The only information I disclose is whether an individual worked with the police or at an immigration office, whether they are male or female, and whether they had retired or were still working for the police/immigration office at the time of the interview. Thus, I did not reveal any personal data I also withheld

explicit information about the geographical area in which each was working, stating only that I conducted the interviews in two large-size cities in Finland. Thus, the ethical issues that might arise from this type of research were dealt with according to the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (TENK), as well as the Finnish Social Science Archive, and they conform to legal and other regulations of ethically sustainable research practices (Hallamaa et al. 2006).

The Finnish Social Science Archive states that expert interviews do not necessarily need to be published or analyzed in a way that removes names and other information that can work as identifiers, but that there must be consent for disclosing this information (Ketola et al. 2016). I nevertheless decided to offer the participants anonymity, and this is therefore what was agreed.

In general, trust and mutual confidence are central in an interview. While this also holds true for so-called elite interviews, it was clear to me that bureaucrats were quite restricted by their official role as to what they could say and what they wanted to tell me. I tried to create a situation in which they felt comfortable talking to me, remembering to listen to their replies and asking follow-up questions if necessary, rather than following my interview outline too strictly. Overall, I would describe the atmosphere in the interviews as rather pleasant. It was clear that I was interested in their work, and the overall tone was one of friendliness and a desire on their part to be helpful and give me the information I needed.

It is also worth noting that, as bureaucrats in public office, these participants have an obligation to disclose information to researchers and the general public, which is why it I believed that talking to me was something they had to do, not something they were particularly keen on doing. The retired officers, however, clearly had an interest in talking to me and wanted to share their experiences and knowledge. Of course, they also had more time for such interviews than their colleagues who were still working.

The police officers seemed particularly positive toward academic research on this subject. Several said that family migration in Finland was understudied and they were glad I was carrying out research on the subject. However, I thought to myself that my approach was probably not the kind of research they had in mind.

As it turned out, the interviews were analyzed in only one of my articles, and there is a myriad of topics and discourses that I have not been able to analyze in the scope of that publication. Yet despite their limited number and the space limitation in a single article, the interviews provided the kind of data that I had hoped for, bringing out the processes of gatekeeping.

The data management guidelines for any personal data require special care. While the interviews for the most part contained only indirect identifiers, the data from the court cases contained what is called direct identifiers (Ketola et al. 2016). My co-author Johanna Leinonen and I took special care in storing and analyzing the data in a way that would not disclose any personal information of the people involved. In accordance with the guidelines by the

Finnish Social Science Archive (Ketola et al. 2016), the database that we created to analyze the cases did not include names or other direct personal information, and we took care to store the paper copies of the case files in a way that would not make them accessible to any third parties.

After these considerations on the ethics, preconceptions and my positionality in collecting, storing and analyzing the data, I will in the following section explore the analytical tools and methods I used to analyze the data on which this thesis builds.

3.4 DISCOURSE, PROBLEM FRAMES, AND FOLLOWING A THREAD

This thesis is based on a constructivist perception of my topic. Constructivist understandings are based on the idea that knowledge is a human construction. The understanding I follow here is that of social constructivism, which sees social and political processes as shaping the forms that knowledge takes (Phillips 1995). In regard to discourse analysis, this means that I understand discourse as a form of knowledge that is socially produced and limits how a certain practice or social object can be thought, written or spoken about (McHoul and Grace 1993). This means that immigration regulations, family migration, or any other issues that I deal with in the four publications and in this introduction do not exist in and of themselves, but come into being by virtue of the meanings attached to them in various discourses and their manifestations. To explicate what I mean, I will show how I analyze the relevant discourses in the four published articles.

I do not see discourses as systems of representation, but rather as effects of power. Discourses both transmit power and participate in constituting it (Foucault 1978, 68–69). This Foucauldian understanding of discourse is in line with my overall assumption about the relationship of gendered family norms and regulating migration: regulations of family migration are based on certain normative assumptions, and yet at the same time they participate in shaping and creating those assumptions.

I was interested in the dominant discourse, namely, the understandings and representations that dominated in my data, as well as the minor discourses, which are often aimed at contesting or challenging the dominant one. Since these are embedded in power structures, I included in my analysis the parliamentary speech of politicians who had introduced a certain discourse and the subject position from which it was introduced, as well as which groups helped maintain and spread the discourse.

Because I was dealing with four different types of data, specifically, parliamentary minutes, newspaper editorials, interview data, and court cases, it was clear that I needed a variety of methods to analyze them. Yet they are all based on similar kinds of methodological and analytical assumptions. This

means that, even though in the article on court cases a full-fledged discourse analysis was not carried out, the texts were still treated as discursive manifestations of the topics analyzed. In other words, even if in Publication IV I do not explicitly refer to discourse as a method, but instead state that I thematically coded and analyzed the interviews, this is based on the assumption that the themes I analyzed, such as culture, gender, or temporality, are not predefined entities. I look at how culture, gender, or temporality are conceptualized by the interviewees and thus probe discursive constructions of them. I will now describe in greater detail the analytical and methodological steps involved in the analysis of each article. Publication I is a discourse analysis of parliamentary debates. It is based on a reading of Finnish parliamentary minutes, law bills, and committee reports pertaining to Finland's Aliens Act from 1999 to 2010. From all of these parliamentary minutes on the Aliens Act and the Integration Act, I identified debates in which marriage migration was tackled by applying a keyword-search on "marriage [*avioliitto*]," "spouse [*puoliso*]," "cohabiting [*avoliitto*]," "partner [*kumppani*]," and "subsistence [*toimeentulo*]."

Through close reading of the material, I identified the topics of same-sex couples' immigration, violence against women with a migrant background, and reduction in the number of marriage migrants, and I coded the material thematically according to these topics. Within each topic, I identified dominant and minor discourses, with the dominant ones being found in the majority of parliamentary addresses and taken up by several political parties, and the minor discourses restricted to single parliamentarians or parties. Within these discourses, I found that threat constructions play a prominent role. I thus decided to analyze these discourses by identifying how policymakers related marriage migration to questions of security.

In Publication II, Karina Horsti and I combined two methods that we found to be well suited for an analysis of policy documents and media material, namely, the Foucauldian discourse analytical method articulated by Carol Lee Bacchi as "What is the problem represented to be?" (WPR), for policy analysis (Bacchi 2009) and news framing analysis (Reese 2009). Both of these qualitative methods consider language use to be socially constituted. In this view, debates that ground policymaking are not reflections of arguments naturally existing in society, but rather are socially constitutive speech acts that shape our understanding of family migration and eventually contribute to the policy agenda and policy framing.

Although these two methods are grounded in similar epistemology, scholars use them to study different social fields. WPR examines problem definitions in policies and policymaking, whereas news framing analysis studies problem definitions in the media. WPR aims to trace assumptions and discourses behind problem representations, while critical news frame analysis focuses on the way in which actors use frames strategically in public debates.

Combining frame analysis and the WPR approach comes close to critical frame analysis (CFA), a type of analysis that introduced the concept of "policy

frame” (Roggeband and Verloo 2007). The WPR approach alone is not adequate for analyzing political speech and journalistic text, because it does not analyze the strategic use of certain frames, which is crucial in CFA. Verloo and Lombardo explain how, on the one hand, frames are used intentionally, but, on the other hand, are rooted in structures and routines about which those using them are not always aware (Verloo and Lombardo 2007). We included the WPR approach in order to show that policies and debates about policy proposals define problems instead of just offering solutions to them. To include this Foucauldian notion of problematization, we included elements of WPR and CFA in our methodological toolbox. We identified what we called “problem framings,” but we also paid attention to agency and the strategic use of frames.

In the scope of our article, we were not able to do a full-fledged WPR analysis that would include the genealogy of certain discourses. Instead, we were more interested in defining how certain problematizations are introduced into the public agenda and how the framings of the intentions of different actors conflict and converge.

For Publication III, in which Johanna Leinonen and I analyzed cases of the Helsinki Administrative Court, we first coded the data thematically and then analyzed it with a method that Moran-Ellis et al. call “following a thread” (Moran-Ellis et al. 2006). We started out with a table in which we entered all the information we had from the court cases. This included obvious data, such as nationality, as well as which law the decision referred to, whether the court overturned the decision by the Immigration Office or whether the appeal was denied. We had a separate column for the justifications given by the appellant, as well as those of the Court and the Immigration Office/Police. After a first reading of the material, we realized that gender roles in the family, as well as the existence of transnational family ties, played a crucial role. These two issues constituted the “thread” that we decided to follow. Gender roles and the existence of other family members thus functioned as the analytical categories we decided on after a close reading of our data. After we coded all the cases, we identified the common perceptions of acceptable family life and gender roles that featured in the material. We then analyzed single case files in greater detail as examples of the most usual ways in which the roles of gender and transnational family members appeared in our data.

The method used in Publication IV, which is based on the interviews with immigration bureaucrats, resembles the method I employed in Publication III. Whereas in that publication Leinonen and I looked at gender roles and transnational family ties, which we felt stood out in the material, in Publication IV I first coded the interview material thematically into the Atlas.ti program. Then I identified the central themes. Although the interviews dealt with a variety of issues, questions of culture and gender seemed to be among the most prominent. I also noticed that interviewees pointed out the passage of time and the slow pace of court rulings, issues that had not occurred to me before I conducted the interviews. After the first thematic reading, I searched for a way

to conceptualize theoretically how immigration bureaucrats evaluated the family ties of marriage migrants; it was then that I realized that Helena Wray's concept of moral gatekeeping (Wray 2015; Wray 2006) captures what I was seeing in my data. At that point, I went through the interview sections dealing with gender, culture, and temporality from the perspective of moral gatekeeping, which functioned as a theoretical nodal point for my analysis.

The methods I employed as well as the data I used inevitably have merits as well as limitations. The merits lie in the wide variety of the data. I was able to conceptualize how migrant family life is viewed through the situated gaze (Yuval-Davis 2014) of different actors, which follows an intersectional understanding of how axes of inequality operate on different levels. Because research on the regulation of family migration to Finland is rather scarce, this broad perspective revealed some general tendencies which, despite the limitedness of each data set on its own, allow me to make some general claims. If a problem frame or discourse reappeared throughout different data sets, it indicated a prevalent way of conceptualizing migrant family life.

The strength of the variety in the data is also its weakness. First of all, having four publications and a different data set for each (only the parliamentary debates were analyzed in two publications, first alone and then along with media data) means that the analysis can only cover a limited number of issues suitable to the scope of one journal article. The interviews in particular covered many other aspects and points that are not analyzed in the publications. Yet the thesis is comprised not only of the articles, but of this thesis summary as well. The summary offers the opportunity to look across the data that are analyzed in the individual publications and deepen the analysis.

Connected with the aforementioned limitation is the comprehensiveness of each data set. Had the thesis been based on interviews, media articles, or court cases alone, then the data selection would have been far too limited, as each data set only covers a limited subject, time period, or topic. The only exceptions are the parliamentary plenary debates and related documents, as they covered a period of more than ten years, and there were so many of them that analyzing those alone would have made for a doctoral thesis (as in fact it has: Outi Lepola's doctoral thesis (Lepola 2000) is based on a similar set of data from 1988 until 1999). I will address this limitation in scope and comprehensiveness for each data set separately.

As for media data, the choice was made to include only editorials and a single newspaper. Although this offered an opportunity to make comparisons with parliamentary data, it gives a limited overview of how migrant family relations are debated publicly. There are many articles besides editorials that could have been considered, as well as many other newspapers or even radio and television broadcasts on the topic, which we omitted from our analysis. Thus, the results of Publication II cannot claim to offer a comprehensive picture of how family and migration are dealt with in the Finnish media.

In relation to the court cases, the limitations of the data lie both in the way in which we searched thematically and in the time frame from which they

come. Because Johanna Leinonen had initially gathered that data with her research on marriage migration in mind, the cases deal only with marriage migrants. It could have been revealing to include other cases as well, for example, those involving unmarried partners or other family members. Same-sex unions were not categorized as such in the archives, but based from the first names of the couples in question, we identified them all as unions between two people of the opposite sex. The other limitation is that our data represent marriages between Finns and foreigners, not cases in which both partners are non-Finnish citizens. Again, while it is valid to focus on this in the scope of a single article-length publication, it would have helped the project as a whole to include other case files.

The interviews with migration officers were fewer in number than I had hoped for when I set out to do my research. It ended up being more difficult to find interviewees than I had anticipated. My perspective is therefore rather limited, and gives insight only into the meanings that some immigration bureaucrats attach to family and marriage migration. And, as I discussed earlier, I do not know whether only a certain “type” of bureaucrat chooses to participate in that kind of research; if so, that would clearly create a bias in my sample towards those who believe it is important to discuss their work with researchers.

While the aforementioned limitations hold true in and of themselves, they are also an inevitable part of selecting which data to examine and what to omit. Had I conducted more interviews, included more court cases from different periods with different groups of family migrants, and/or included a great deal of other media data, this thesis would have never been completed, as there would have been too much material to handle for a doctoral dissertation, which is limited in time and resources.

With regard to method, this project relies almost completely on qualitative methods, with just a few pieces of quantitative data used in Publication III. It would have been interesting to contrast my qualitative findings on the categorizations of family migrants with statistics on different residence permit categories for different groups of migrants. Unfortunately, statistics on the different residence permit categories are not very detailed; only the numbers of accepted and denied permits are available per country per year. Yet it might have been possible to obtain more detailed quantitative data on request; such material would have provided an interesting frame of reference with which to contrast the findings that I have here.

Another methodological shortcoming is that, with the exception of Publication II, most articles do not develop any new methodological approaches. This is partly related to the limitations of a journal article, in which there is not much room for methodological development. A challenge of applying the perspective of problematization is that it tends to start with the conception that something is problematized, and thus puts more emphasis on the problematizations than on the ways in which they are challenged. In Publication I, I present both minor and dominating discourses, but for most

of the other publications, the analysis mainly focused on the ways in which migrant family life was represented as a problem in one way or the other. Thus, it is worth noting that, while these discourses are the ones that dominated the debate, they do not represent the opinions of the general public or the entire public sphere of debates on migration and the family.

4 PUBLICATIONS

My research results are published in four articles in which I explore the normative underpinnings of family migration in public discourses, policies, and their implementation. At the same time, the articles investigate the normative frameworks that regulations on family migration create. Each article is based on a separate set of data; thus, this thesis is able to explore the regulation of family migration in different empirical surroundings.

In analytical terms, the publications are structured as follows: Publication I examines prevailing political discourses and how arguments for or against the right to family reunification are politically justified. Publication II identifies similar discourses, but analyzes them in more detail, reads them alongside editorials from the newspaper, and looks at how these discourses become problem frames. The argument is made that politicians and the media present problem frames; how the Finnish family is presented as a problem is examined. Publication III then moves from the level of political discourse and policymaking to that of implementation and looks at the way in which transnational family ties influence how marriages are perceived in court. Here, the questions of gender, age, class, and race that already surfaced in Publications I and II become relevant, but in a different context and setting. Finally, Publication IV is based on interviews with immigration bureaucrats, and thus represents the street-level of decision-making about residence permits on family migration. Here, the bureaucrat is conceived of as a gatekeeper. The bureaucrats seem to operationalize moral and economic arguments similar to those I identified in the public political discourse in Publications I and II. They also consider the relationship between their work and that of the court, which again links Publication IV to the analysis of the court cases.

Below, I will present each of the four publications, their main approaches, data, and findings. Here, I will keep to the findings of the articles themselves. In the chapter that follows this overview, I will consider my results from a broader perspective, show how the analytical and empirical levels are linked, add some new perspectives to my findings, and present the results in a thematic order that positions them vis-à-vis the broader themes of dependency, moral gatekeeping, and care.

Publication I appeared as a chapter in the peer-reviewed anthology *Race, Ethnicity and Welfare States: An American Dilemma?* (2015). My chapter, “Collective threats and individual rights: Political debates on marriage migration to Finland,” explores the threats that policymakers attribute to marriage migration and how these are used to justify restriction of individual migrants’ legal rights. How is the restriction of marriage migration constructed as a political issue in the debate over immigration, and how are these debates morally grounded?

The issue of “securitization” is often studied separately from issues of gender and migration. My chapter suggests that they should be studied together. In my investigation of how Finnish policymakers construct gender and sexuality in debates over migration law, I show that questions of gender, sexuality, and family become security issues as well. The data for the analysis are the minutes of the Finnish Parliament’s plenary debates between 1999 and 2010. The analytical method is a discourse analysis in which I identify dominant and minor discourses. The theoretical framework is that of securitization (Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde 1998) and threat constructions. The debates selected for analysis focused on three main issues. The first concerns the immigration of same-sex partners, which stirred up great controversy in the plenary sessions in 1999 during which amendments to the 1991 Aliens Act were discussed. The bill proposed that same-sex couples be treated as cohabiting heterosexual couples. In the course of these debates, foreign nationality and sexuality became intertwined in constructions of “Finnish” and “foreign” family norms. In discussions of the second issue, namely, violence against women with a migrant background, moral arguments were rife. Here, policymakers depicted a violent migrant family culture as a threat to Finnish family norms and values. The third issue concerned the numbers of incoming marriage migrants. The dominant discourse presented the rising number of marriage migrants as an economic threat to the welfare state, and the parliamentary debates revolved around a possible rise in immigration numbers through so-called “marriages of convenience” and a proposal for income requirements for certain groups of marriage migrants.

Moral arguments, which prevailed in the debates between 1999 and 2004, claimed that marriage migration poses a threat to Finnish family values. Economic arguments, which replaced moral ones between 2000 and 2010, asserted that immigration is a drain on public welfare. These moral and economic arguments have constituted the dominant discourse on marriage migration in Finland, but they have been contested by minor discourses consisting of legal arguments stressing the human rights of individual migrants. The dominant discourse was pitched at the level of the society, while the minor legal discourse focused on the individual.

The main result of my analysis is that policymakers use morally underpinned understandings of acceptable family life to construct notions of national identity. In debates on the immigration rights of same-sex couples, parliamentarians framed homosexuality as something that should not be accepted by Finnish authorities, depicting it as something that is not and should not be part of Finnish family life. I also show that political debates in Finland participate in producing culturalized discourses on violence in migrant families. Furthermore, family ties of people who originally migrated for humanitarian reasons have shifted from portrayals of those in need of greater protection to those persons who will be a burden on the welfare state.

Publication II was co-authored with Karina Horsti and entitled “Conditions of cultural citizenship: Intersections of gender, race and age in

public debates on family migration.” It was published in *Citizenship Studies* in 2015.

This contribution examined public debates on family migration by focusing on intersections of gender, age, race, and religion. Our analysis of how migrant children or the elderly from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds feature in public debates reveals the varieties of conditions for cultural citizenship and belonging. In particular, we demonstrate how humanitarian discourses of care are crucial in the construction of cultural citizenship. Certain figures are constructed as culturally and morally incapable of citizenship in a Nordic welfare state, while others are included as worthy of belonging. In particular, the potential vulnerability and suitability of certain young and elderly migrants strengthens the political claims for or against their inclusion. We address the discursive context within which policymakers, the media, and the public negotiate questions of migration policies and citizenship. Thus, we examine how debates on family migration construct and condition citizenship and belonging.

Our analysis is based on minutes of the Finnish parliamentary debates and editorials in *Helsingin Sanomat* dealing with family and migration between 1999 and 2010. We combine Carol Lee Bacchi’s approach “What’s the Problem Represented to be” with critical frame analysis to identify problem frames. Our theoretical approaches are grounded in feminist citizenship studies, notions of the ideal victim, and intersectionality. Our analysis shows that, for those arguing for more liberal immigration policies, family life is presented as a moral human right and a means to integration and citizenship. Conservatives who argued for stricter policies presented the family as a potential threat, either as an economic welfare burden or as a problem of social order. Both sides used victimization and images of vulnerability to support their arguments, and both used the category of a migrant family as a mirror, an “ethnic reflection” against which Finnish society, culture, and belonging are (re)valued and (re)confirmed. This ethnic reflection depended on an interplay of intersectional categorizations, particularly young age, old age, and female gender, as categories which – particularly when they intersect – position migrants as being worthy of cultural citizenship rights.

In **Publication III**, Johanna Leinonen and I analyze the processes at work when transnational family ties meet the legal norms as interpreted by immigration authorities and the courts. The article “Court decisions over marriage migration in Finland: A problem with transnational family ties” appeared in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* in 2014. By looking at how the Helsinki Administrative Court implemented Finland’s Aliens Acts of 1991 in the year 2000 and the new Aliens Act from 2004 in 2005, we analyzed the disjunction between legal definitions of “acceptable” married life and the reality of transnational family relations. The main body of source material is composed of court cases from 2000 and 2005 involving non-EU/EEA citizens whose residence permit applications based on marriage to a

Finnish citizen were refused by the Finnish Immigration Service (FIS), and who then appealed to the Helsinki Administrative Court.

Our analysis is based on the analytical concepts of transnationalism and intersectionality. The research led to three main conclusions. First, our study illustrated how nation-states fail to recognize the existence and importance of multi-sited family ties in regulating marriage migration. Second, we showed how marriage migration of certain groups, like the elderly, is poorly understood both by immigration authorities and scholars, and thus we argue for the importance of an intersectional approach in studying the regulation of marriage migration. Third, our analysis showed how legal analyses of the regulation of marriage migration can and should pay attention to the agency of transnational couples when they attempt to have their marriage recognized by immigration authorities.

Publication IV is entitled “What now could be an acceptable marriage’: Marriage migration and moral gatekeeping in Finland.” It was published by the *Journal of Family Issues* 2015 as part of a special issue on marriage migration edited by Saskia Bonjour and Albert Kraler. This article focuses on bureaucrats’ role in the migration process and sheds light on how migrants’ family relations are evaluated in immigration regulations. The article analyzes eight interviews with immigration officers and police staff. The semi-structured interviews were analyzed using the theoretical concept of moral gatekeeping (Wray 2006) as a means of grasping the normative aspects of immigration regulations.

When gatekeepers discuss what kind of a normative framework should be applied in assessing applications of marriage migrants, they implement what they consider to be universal values. Yet they also adhere to cultural relativism in reinscribing and creating novel divisions between “us” and “them.” Immigration bureaucrats reproduce common assumptions about women as being particularly vulnerable and lacking in agency. A recurring theme in gatekeeping discourse emerges in the interviewees’ treatment of time and temporality, an issue that has not received the scholarly attention it deserves.

Potentially, in order to belong in Finland, migrants must first belong in their home countries – at least at the level of performed marriage practices. The universality and dominance of western norms is thereby reasserted in and through a cultural relativism that creates stable notions of indigenous cultures to which migrants’ marriage practices should conform.

The article shows that Finnish bureaucrats are privy to transnational concerns about young female marriage migrants as victims of forced marriages and of male marriage migrants as abusers of immigration regulations (cf. Wray 2011). Yet unlike their counterparts in most other European countries, Finnish immigration bureaucrats find arranged marriages rather acceptable.

Time is an inextricable part of the way marriages are evaluated in the immigration process. Yet it is not only the time a couple has spent together before filing an application which is relevant, but also the time that passes after the process has been set in motion. The point at which the marriage is

evaluated, and the slowness of the juridical process, changes the way marriages are evaluated. What immigration bureaucrats at the Police or the Finnish Immigration Service deem to be a marriage of convenience at one point in time can turn into a marriage that qualifies for immigration at a later point. The converse is also true: a marriage that officers assess favorably can be labeled fake by immigration bureaucrats after some time has passed.

5 FAMILY MIGRATION ACROSS POLICY ARENAS

I understand family migration, transnational families, and the regulation of migration on the basis of family ties as a phenomenon that comes into being through a variety of processes that are co-constituted. This perspective is a central outcome of my analysis, which seeks to examine how family migration in Finland plays out on different policy levels. I have gathered data from courts, the Finnish Parliament, and the media, and I have interviewed immigration officers and police officers. Having analyzed each set of data separately and published the outcomes in a series of articles, I realized that by separating the regulation of family migration to Finland into distinct policy arenas, I missed the way in which different levels of policymaking interact with each other, which is what I would like to explore here.

As all scholars know who have tried to compare different data sets, the levels of comparison tend to diverge from one another, with only a conclusion briefly analyzing them together. This is why I propose a more holistic approach, one that tries to blur the lines between “abstract” norms and values and a “concrete” measurement of family ties.

My main research results, examined at the level of single publications and distinguishing different policy arenas, can be divided along an axis of abstract norms and moral values (parliamentary and media debates, Publications I and II), moving toward the relevance of transnational family ties (the Helsinki Administrative Court, Publication III), toward gatekeeping processes by bureaucrats dealing with residence permit applications (Publication IV). When I began my research, this was how I saw the process of immigration control: I conceptualized the Finnish Parliament as the main decision-making body in shaping the Aliens Act, an act which is then implemented by the Helsinki Administrative Court and immigration bureaucrats, with the media as an external force commenting on decisions and debates at each of these levels. In conference and seminar presentations of my research, I often produced this power point slide to elaborate on the data which I analyzed in my dissertation project:

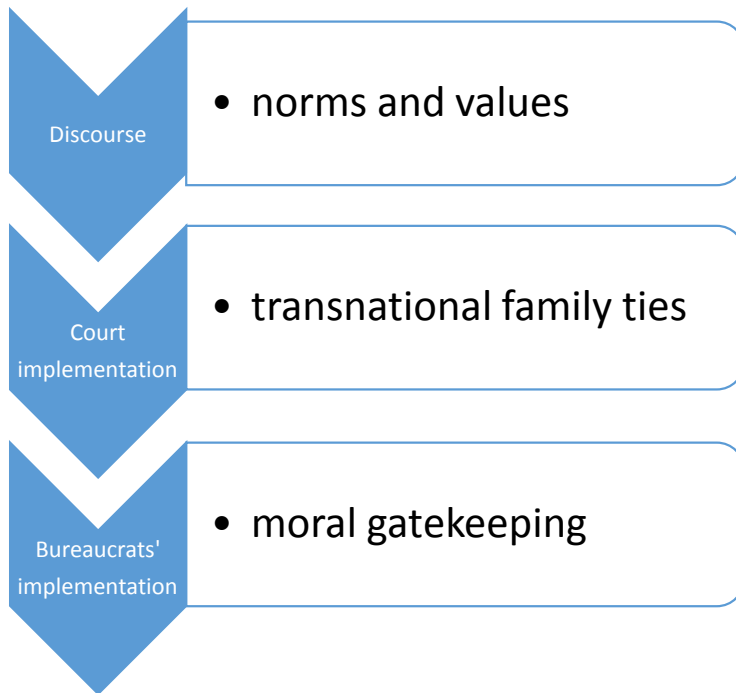


Figure 4: Power point slide presenting my research data.

The power point slides appeared one after the other while I explained how the system functions: The image of parliament appears first. Parliament passes legislation, in this case the Aliens Act (at which point the image of the law appeared), which steers the decisions made by the Immigration Office (*Maaahanmuuttovirasto*) and the police (*Poliisi*), which have to enforce the law (the logos of each appear). They make a decision about a residence permit, and if the decision is negative, then the applicant can take the case to an administrative court, which can overturn the original decision made by the police or the Immigration Office, in which case the decision is taken up again and re-evaluated. Finally, the logo of Finland's largest newspaper appeared above, indicating that media debates exist either prior to, or commenting upon, each of the steps in these processes, without being directly involved in the decision-making that was indicated in my presentations.

Yet this conceptualization misses an important point. While the research results of each of the articles are innovative and fresh, looking at them separately, as I have done in chapter 4, would yield unsurprising results. The fact that public political debates are argued at the level of norms and values, that courts which enforce the law focus on each individual couple and their family ties, and that bureaucrats act as gatekeepers are all verities. Figure 5 shows the various levels of my results when divided by separated groups of data:

Figure 5: Analytical division of research results



Instead of presenting my results according to this neat division, I want to propose a different reading, one that does not separate normative discourses on the level of policymaking from the way in which existing family ties are evaluated by the court and moral norms of bureaucrats. Instead, I will look at the interactions of these levels. Specifically, I suggest that there would be no implementation of immigration law without immigration policies, that there would be no policy without the migration of family members, and that it is certain circumstances that lead families living apart from each other across national borders in the first place. All of these situations relate to norms and values in society and how they are manifested in the media and other public debates.

Because I am interested in public debates on policymaking, in policies and their implementation in immigration control, and in the norms and values associated with these matters, I want to consider connections and interactions at this particular nexus. Of course, family migration to Finland is a phenomenon that does not exist in isolation, but is part of Finland's policies on migration as a whole; it relates to Finland's history, its past and present political and societal developments, as well as to Nordic, European, and global developments of international migration, and to policies and debates regulating that. I will broaden my results along these lines in my concluding

chapter, where I place my findings in a larger context. The present chapter links the results of the individual articles, which provide the most detailed and specialized results, to the concluding chapter, which discusses the relevance of my results on a broader scale. Below, I will go beyond the results of the individual articles and discuss how they relate to the broader issues that I raised in my research questions.

I divide my results into three thematic areas that provide answers to my research questions:

The first thematic area deals with dependency and family migration (5.1.), and provides answers to research question 1, which is how the regulation of family migration positions migrants along intersecting categories of inequality and with what effects; the research suggested that many intersecting categories of inequality are related to questions of dependence and independence. The research also answered research question 2, which asks which gatekeeping processes are inherent in discussing and implementing the regulation of family migration. The results showed that migration law requires certain types of dependence, but at the same time attempts to prevent other forms of dependence. Thus, section 5.1 covers many important topics relevant to current debates on the welfare state.

The second theme relates to moral gatekeeping processes (5.2) and addresses the aforementioned research question 1, on intersecting axes of inequality, and research question 2, on the gatekeeping processes. Here, I show that moral understandings of acceptable family life create notions of heterosexual Finnish families. I also argue that victimizing all women, children, and elderly women builds on moral perceptions of who is considered worthy of inclusion. Furthermore, I argue that the way bureaucrats assess marriages builds on particular understandings of Finnish and foreign marriage culture.

The third thematic area of my research results focuses on care and transnational family ties (5.3) and provides answers to research question 3, namely, how migrant family relations are evaluated for immigration purposes and what this evaluation tells us about gendered understandings of family life. I show how the care relations of women and men are evaluated in different ways and that the right to care for elderly parents is connected with questions of cultural citizenship. Here, it is the whitewashing of so-called suitable victims that make some care relations more acceptable than others.

Below, I will present each of these three themes and the results of the articles in greater details. It is, of course, apparent that, even here, the results are separated into three different themes only for analytical purposes and greater clarity. The themes are interconnected, something that I will highlight in each of the analytical sections.

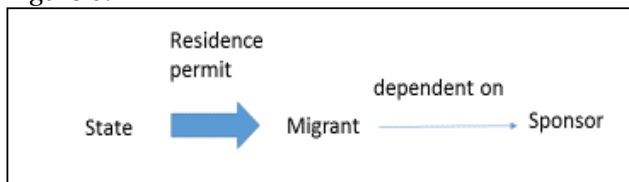
5.1 DEPENDENCE

In my analysis of the regulation of family reunification across policy arenas, I found dependence to be a key theme cutting through and connecting these areas. As Strasser and her co-authors point out, “[d]ependency is probably the key concept in a state's determination of both who and what is family” (Strasser et al. 2009, 169). I arrived at three different types of migrant dependencies that are either explicitly or implicitly inherent in policies on family reunification, which I call processes of dependence: dependence on the sponsor caused by the state, dependence on the sponsor prevented by the state, and dependence on the sponsor required by the state.

Migrant dependence caused by the state

The first process of dependence is an effect of migration policies and one that has been more or less invisible throughout the research period. Dependence on a sponsor is inherent in immigration policies, a situation that states and their immigration policies exacerbate (Anderson 1993; Eggebø 2010; Kofman and Phizacklea 2000; Liversage 2013; Walsum and Spijkerboer 2007). Figure 2 shows the process at work: the state grants a residence permit to a migrant on the basis of family ties (thick arrow), which then makes the migrant dependent on the sponsor (thin arrow). Family migrants are both legally and economically dependent on their relationship with the sponsor (and as a result of these legal and economic dependencies, psychological dependence probably also emerges). As I demonstrate in Publication 1, terminating that relationship can mean loss of the basis for residency, which is particularly problematic in cases of violence and abuse (Burman 2012; Anderson 1993; Narayan 1997). Legal dependence is tied to economic dependence, particularly in cases in which a subsistence or income requirement forces the sponsor to provide for the incoming migrant.

Figure 6:



Type 1: Migrant dependence caused by the state.

As my analysis of parliamentary records in Publication 1 shows, migrants' dependence on their partners due to immigration legislation, and the possible experiences of violence connected with such dependence, did not play a major role in the Finnish debates on marriage migration or on immigration in

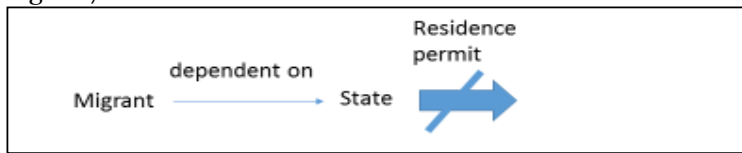
general. Throughout the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s, the question was only raised by particular parliamentarians, but was not debated further. The topic finally appeared in the parliamentary records when the Finnish Parliament discussed a bill in 1999 concerning the new law on integration. The bill's preamble acknowledged that many migrant women may remain in violent relationships for fear of losing their residence permit. The preamble tellingly states that misleading information about how divorce affects the women's migration status is given to them "by their spouse or their own cultural community." As Publication 1 argues, this turns the responsibility for the dependent situation over to a cultural community and takes it out of the hands of the Finnish authorities. Migrant dependence created by the state is hardly ever acknowledged, and is overshadowed by culturalized discourses on violent migrant families, which I will explore further in sub-chapter 5.2.

In welfare state literature, dependence and independence play a vital role. In particular, the social democratic welfare state is said to offer workers greater independence from the capitalist market and from employers by processes of de-commodification (Esping-Andersen 1990). The feminist critique of this view demands different analytical tools for identifying dependencies of women in welfare states (Orloff 1993; Lewis 1992; Lister 1990; Sainsbury 1999). While de-commodification makes men more independent of the market and thereby *from* work, claims for women to participate in wage-paying labor means that their independence is gained *through* work (Nyberg 1997). The Nordic welfare state has a reputation of being particularly woman friendly, despite the fact that women remain dependent: their personal dependence on a male provider turns into public dependence on the state, both as clients of welfare state provisions and through being employed by the state (Hernes 1987). Some scholars argue for a shift in focus toward autonomy rather than independence, assessing the welfare state from the perspective of whether or not women can form and maintain autonomous households (Bambra 2004; Orloff 1993). The majority of marriage migrants are women, and their dependence on the sponsor creates a situation that does not really fit the ideal of the dual breadwinner families, which prevails in Finland as in all the Nordic countries (Eggebo 2010).

To summarize my analysis of dependence created by the state, I argue that dependence on a Finnish resident spouse has not been placed on the political agenda until quite recently, and there is still too little official information about how separation from a violent spouse affects the residence permit of a marriage migrant. This answers research question 1, which asked how migrants are positioned along intersecting categories of inequality, and shows that in cases of marriage migration in particular, dependence on the spouse does not fit into the Nordic ideal of dual breadwinner families; instead, it puts the incoming migrant in a situation of dependence that is quite contradictory to the vast majority of families in Finland.

Migrant dependence prevented by the state

Figure 7.



Type 2: Migrant dependence prevented by the state.

The second dependence process that relates to family reunification is that in which dependence is prevented by the state. As such, it is part of the gatekeeping processes and favors certain groups of migrants over others. The figure above illustrates this process. If someone relies on public assistance, such as unemployment or other social benefits, this migrant is economically dependent on the state, indicated by the first thin blue arrow. Yet dependence can lead to refusal by the state to grant a residence permit. An incoming migrant has to prove to not become dependent from public welfare in order to qualify for a residence permit. As in most countries, there is an income requirement for many family migrants, which is set so high that it cannot be met if the spouse and/or the sponsor are not gainfully employed. As I show in Publication 1, where I discuss the economy of marriage migration, it is particularly interesting to see how the rights of family reunification for those under humanitarian protection, as well as the economic viewpoints of protecting the welfare state, have played out over time.

The income requirement that Finland introduced for marriage migrants in 1999 has remained unchanged for more than ten years. Parliamentarians agreed that humanitarian migration should always lead to an exemption from the income requirement. But since August 2010, this exemption holds true only for already existing family ties. For cases of family formation after family members have moved to Finland, sponsors under international protection still need to prove a stable income. Thus, as argued in Publication 1, the immigration law has created growing hierarchies between different groups of family migrants: between those marrying Finnish vs. foreign residents (marrying a Finnish sponsor means exemption from the income requirement), and between those establishing family ties before moving to Finland and those who established those ties after moving to Finland.

In their genealogy of dependence in the American welfare state, Fraser and Gordon show how dependence used to be the norm and had no negative connotations (Fraser and Gordon 1994). It referred to a social relation: A dependent was simply a person who worked for someone else, which held true for the majority of people. It was only with industrialization that dependence became a personal trait that carried clear negative, highly gendered, and racialized implications. In the case of family reunification, there are racialized boundaries as to how dependent on the welfare state a migrant is expected to

become and whether or not this is something negative. Already the fact that family members of Nordic citizens and those from ETA countries are exempt shows that the further away geographically a person is from the Finnish nation-state, the higher is the expected probability that this person might become dependent on public support.

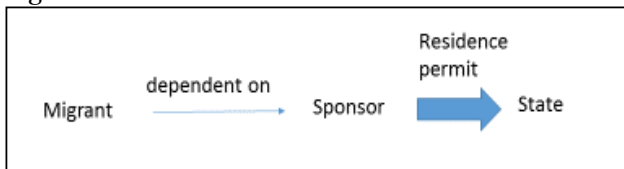
The financial threat that a migrant poses to the Finnish welfare state is strong enough to override even those public discourses and campaigns that demand more favorable Finnish policies for migrants. As I show in Publication 2, the influential and widely read newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* took a public stand defending the right of two elderly women to be granted residency as part of family reunification with their children. Even the former Finnish president, Tarja Halonen, and the then prime minister, Matti Vanhanen, demanded that these women be allowed to stay in Finland with their children and grandchildren, a case that I will discuss further in the context of the third process of dependence, that is, dependence required by the state. In connection to welfare dependence, it was the potential financial burden that elderly migrants might place on the welfare state that finally dominated the public and highly mediatized debate, and convinced *Helsingin Sanomat* to distance themselves from earlier demands for more favorable policies or policy implementation.

To summarize my findings on dependencies prevented by the state, this thesis arrives at the conclusion that the protection of public costs to the welfare state overrides discourses on human rights. This holds true even for groups which, owing to their intersectional positioning by the public and the media, were initially awarded inclusion and compassion, such as the women in the Grandmother Case. The threat of high welfare expenses ultimately held sway in parliament and the media. I thus show that protecting the welfare state is a key element in gatekeeping procedures, which answers research question 2, in asks what gatekeeping processes are at play in discussing and implementing the regulation of family migration.

My findings on the dependencies prevented by the state also connects with research question 1, on how the regulation of family migration positions migrants along intersecting categories of inequality and with what effects. The income requirement has highly racialized boundaries and effects, as it exempts family members of Finnish citizens. Clearly, there are assumptions about proximity and belonging: the further we are from our “imagined community” in Finland (Anderson 2006), the more likely we are to assume that people rely on public welfare. While the Finnish income requirement is not set as high as in some European countries such as Norway or Great Britain, it is clear that racial and ethnic differences are only accepted when they intersect with high socio-economic status, whereas ethnic and national proximity allows for intersections with lower-class status.

Migrant dependence required by the state

Figure 8.



Type 3: Migrant dependency required by the state.

The third dependence process at play when states regulate family reunification is dependence on the sponsor, a dependence that is required by the state in order for a residence permit to be granted. An example is the dependence of an underage child on its parents. In most countries, this means a child younger than 18, although for children of EU citizens, those younger than 21 are considered dependent. Proof of dependence can be biological ties as verified by DNA and/or other proof of legal guardianship. For elderly parents of adult migrant residents, the required dependence is more cumbersome to prove. There has to be proof that the family member residing abroad is completely dependent on the family member in Finland and that this dependence is the basis for being granted a residence permit.

As Karina Horsti and I show in Publication II, the question of whether Finnish immigration law should recognize the right of elderly people to stay with their adult children, or whether Finnish residents should have the right to care for their elderly parents by bringing them to Finland, relates to questions of cultural citizenship (Rosaldo 1994). Some politicians as well as *Helsingin Sanomat* argued that the demand for total dependence on the Finnish sponsor is hard to meet, and they proposed a more inclusive policy for elderly grandparents. Yet the fear of high welfare costs to Finland prevailed. The law remained unchanged in its requirement of total dependence, despite suggestions by the Finnish Christian Democrats in 2009 to alter it to a state of being “considerably dependent.” Nor did *Helsingin Sanomat* continue to demand that these elderly women stay. The whole debate was intertwined with intersectional positionings of belonging. The prominent cases of Irina Antonova and Evelyne Fayadel, which we analyze in Publication II, involved elderly females who professed the Christian religion. The public debates argued for their right to belong in Finland as “Finnish” family members, and the public found it appalling that the grandmothers were threatened with deportation and separation from their children.

Looking at the different actors who were discussing the dependence of elderly migrants on the welfare state, I see a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, the elderly migrant has to be provided for in order to prevent that person from becoming a burden on the welfare state. On the other hand, once someone has a residence permit to live in Finland, the person is entitled to basic residence-based welfare provisions. The contradiction lies here: The

regulations that claim that the incoming elderly person has to be “totally” dependent on the family member in Finland pre-select people in need of medical and other assistance, and thus it is quite likely that, even if their children look after them, the elderly will eventually require professional help.

At work here is a bargaining of dependencies. If there is enough dependence on the Finnish family member, then the dependent can become part of the Finnish welfare system, but only insofar as he or she is entitled to rights in that system without being dependent on it. As a result, the threshold of having someone move to Finland is so high that it can hardly be met by anyone.

The multi-functionality of dependence refers to the fact that societies accept certain dependencies, such as the dependence of children on their parents, since these serve important functions for personal development (Baltes 1996, 9). As I show in my analysis of family reunification policies, these types of accepted dependencies are legally redefined in family reunification policies. The dependence of a child on the parent is set to end at age 18 in Finland, but, for EU citizens, the age ends at 21. Publication II shows how the dependence and vulnerability of children make them suitable victims. Those arguing for stricter immigration policies claim that this would prevent families from sending children to Finland in the first place. Here, the children’s dependence on their parents is used against them.

Those in favor of policies that make it easier for unaccompanied children to apply for family reunification in Finland also use the children’s vulnerable and dependent position to underline their argument. The intersection of nationality, race, gender, and age render certain groups of migrants dependent enough to be worthy of compassion. Both the very young and the very old are presented as vulnerable enough to be eligible for migration.

This thesis is concerned primarily with the multi-causality of dependence, namely, that social, psychological, economic, and cultural conditions influence dependence (Baltes 1996, 9–10). State bureaucrats, policymakers and public debates shape, and are in turn shaped by, social (type 1 and 3), economic (type 1 and 2), and cultural (type 1 and 3) conditions of dependence (see Table 1) when they conceptualize familial ties and immigration restrictions.

Table 1. Processes of dependence and how they appear in specific publications

	Type 1: Migrant dependence caused by the state	Type 2: Migrant dependence prevented by the state	Type 3: Migrant dependence required by the state
Publication I	dual breadwinner vs. dependence on partner violence and dependence	income requirement	
Publication II		elderly migrants as a threat to public expenses	grandmother case
Publication III			assumptions of dependence and care relations

I argue that dependence is a crucial concept in the analysis of family reunification and the welfare state. What makes it so interesting is that it serves multiple functions. It is both an analytical category, as in dependence type 1 (created by the state), and also a concept in common usage, for example, in the text of the Aliens Act or in parliamentary and media debates (dependence types 2 and 3, dependence prevented and required by the state). It carries both negative and positive connotations, as something to be avoided by all means or as something required by law. While dependence is not the only way to conceptualize people on the move who seek a residence permit through family ties, it shows the various ambiguities at play when states regulate migration. While concepts such as vulnerability and precarity could also illuminate certain effects of dependence (both created and avoided by the state), I find that the concept of dependence, in its twofold meaning, shows the various ways in which intersecting axes of exclusion and inclusion are at work.

5.2 MORAL GATEKEEPING AND INTERSECTING BORDERS OF BELONGING

Discussing, formulating, and implementing policies on family reunification are part of what I call gatekeeping processes. As I explored in the theoretical chapter, section 2.4, all regulation of migration is ultimately gatekeeping, as it seeks to control the movement of people and define whether or not they are allowed to enter in a country legally and remain there. I argue that controlling family reunification carries more implications than simply denying legal entry to some, while allowing family reunification plans for others. While the concept of gatekeeping suggests that some people are allowed in while others are “kept” outside of the gate, it is more complicated than that. Gatekeeping is not only about admitting or denying entry. As Eithne Luibhéid states in her analysis of entry regulations in the United States, “. . . even when the processing of immigrants resulted in their admission, it also situated them within larger relations of power to which they remained subjected after entry”(Luibhéid 2002, 15–16). Thus, the regulation of family migration not only controls which persons are allowed in and which are not, but continues to control them even when the individuals are already living in Finland.

Discourses on family reunification create ways in which migrant families can be talked about and thought of. They define the framework in which policymaking and implementation take place. Family and marriage are institutions that carry several moral assumptions and ideals. Thus, I argue in line with Helena Wray (Wray 2006) the regulation of family migration can be conceptualized as building on processes of *moral* gatekeeping.

As scholars have shown in examining other countries, discourses on migration and the family have heavy moral underpinnings (Eggebo 2013a; Eggebo 2013b; Wray 2006; Wray 2011; Bonjour and de Hart 2013; Strasser et al. 2009; Charsley 2012; Hart 2007; Hart 2006). My research suggests that Finland is no exception. I show that moral understandings of acceptable or unacceptable family life are highly gendered. Through my intersectional analysis, I identified several intersecting axes of exclusion that are relevant for family reunification in Finland, including such often overlooked categories as age, sexuality, and religion in addition to the more common ones of gender, race, and nationality. My understanding is that none of these categories operates in isolation. Rather, they mutually reinforce each other and create certain positionalities. Still, gender features as the most prominent category, a red thread that runs through all of my data. Immigration bureaucrats, the media, politicians, and even the courts displayed gendered ways of conceptualizing the migration of family members. Thus, of the three ways in which moral gatekeeping processes emerged from my data, two entail gender as it intersects with other categories, while only one relates to sexuality. In all three processes, intersecting categories of exclusion were used to create borders of belonging (see Table 2 for an overview).

The first category of exclusion draws moral borders of acceptable family life on the basis of sexual orientation. In these discourses, same-sex couples feature as a threat to Finnish family norms (Publication I). The second category is gatekeeping through victimization, casting certain people as suitable victims. Here, it is particularly the intersection of gender, age, and race that are relevant (Publications I, II, and IV). The third category relates to the evaluation of “real” marriages and identification of so-called marriages of convenience. Central to these evaluations are gender roles, notions of “culture” and the gatekeeper’s ponderings over temporality and the role of the Helsinki Administrative Courts (Publications III and IV).

Table 2. The ways in which moral gatekeeping plays out, as shown in the publications for this thesis

	Same-sex couples	Victimization	“Real” marriages
Publication I	Threat to Finnish family norms	Culturized discourses on violence	
Publication II		Women and children, the “grandmother case”	
Publication III			Gendered family norms (breadwinner vs. career and cultural expectations) Migrant agency
Publication IV		Preventing forced marriages	Temporality and the role of court rulings Culture

Borders of acceptable family life and sexual orientation

The first process of moral gatekeeping that I explore here is related to a public and political debate that took place in 1999. Most discourses on family migration identified in my doctoral research cross both time and space, meaning that they occur at different points in time across different policy arenas and even across different countries or continents. The debates on family reunification rights of same-sex couples¹⁶ that took place in 1999 present quite an interesting case study, as they were bound to a certain point in time when same-sex couples did not yet have the right to register their relationship in Finland, something that became possible only in 2002. In 2014, the Finnish parliament voted to change the marriage act into an equal marriage act.¹⁷

As I show in Publication I, the dominant discourse about same-sex couples' right to family reunification represented it as a threat to Finnish family norms. Another way of arguing against family reunion of same-sex couples was to claim that it does not allow for the equal treatment of all Finnish couples vs. those seeking family reunion with a foreign spouse. The logic of the argument was that Finnish non-heterosexual couples were not granted legal protection, which is why same-sex couples should not be recognized by Finnish (immigration) law either. In fact, the whole debate was much ado about nothing, as there was never a suggestion of changing the legislation in any way, nor was there any mention of same-sex couples in the actual text of the law. It was only in the preamble of the law that the text read that, in its implementation of the legislation, Finland has treated same-sex couples the same way as heterosexual cohabiting partners.

Alternative sexuality was presented as being non-Finnish. Immigration control takes a central role in nation-making processes (Luibhéid 2002, xviii), and the control of foreign sexuality offered a chance to proclaim heterosexual family values as "Finnish." In these debates, nation-making worked as a

¹⁶ I speak about same-sex couples, not about equal marriage, since the debates focused on cases of cohabitation rather than marriage. I adopt the terminology that the Finnish parliamentarians used. My own preference would be to speak of LHBT or LHBTQ-people's right to family reunification, without predefining the sexual identity of the individuals with which these debates were concerned. As I discuss at the end of this subchapter, immigration law always participates in influencing and shaping queer identities. I understand that by using the same expressions, I too am participating in these processes. Yet because here I am here concerned with the way policymakers define and discuss families and couples, I would find it misleading to speak of debates of family reunification of LHBT or LHBTQ, since this expression was not used in policy debates of the time.

¹⁷ The law is currently in preparation and will come into force in 2017. It was passed as a result of an active campaign and a citizen bill. Meanwhile, another citizen bill in preparation is intended to overturn the new law.

heterosexual project, with parliamentarians ontending that same-sex couples were as foreign to “Finnish values” as circumcision (Publication I).

These discourses cut across political parties, with parliamentarians from opposition parties like the Centre Party as well as those from parties which were in the government at the time, such as the Social Democrats or the Left Alliance, voicing similar concerns. Yet their arguments differed: the Centre Party claimed that same sex unions went against Finnish family norms, while parliamentarians from the Social Democratic and Left Parties were concerned about the equal treatment of “Finnish” couples vis-à-vis those with a non-Finnish partner. The arguments against same-sex family reunification operated on a collective level, and were used either to defend family norms or to point out the threats to the moral order of Finnish society.

Concerns about Finnish collectivity were also interspersed with voices citing individual rights: several parliamentarians from the Green Party challenged the dominant discourse by underlining the legal rights of same-sex couples. They stressed the right to and protection of family life, and mentioned the fact that same-sex couples were nothing new to Finnish society, but already existed in Finland.

The processes at play here are examples of two aspects of gatekeeping – what I call the “gatekeeping of morals” and the “moral+gatekeeping=moral gatekeeping.” Gatekeeping of morals refers to the fact that parliamentarians were concerned that the moral understanding of acceptable family life (here read “heterosexual”) would be threatened by incoming queer couples making claims for their rights to inclusion. The second process, “moral+gatekeeping=moral gatekeeping,” in which moral understandings are activated as a form of exclusionary practice, was at work in two ways. Those who opposed queer family reunification rights found it morally wrong to grant same-sex couples the right to bring their partners to Finland, while those who were arguing in favor of queer family migration saw it as a moral obligation to treat same-sex couples and heterosexual ones in equal ways.

A crucial point related to this topic, which was not addressed in Publication I, is something that I wish to develop now in re-evaluating my results several years after the original manuscript was written. It is important to remember that immigration control does not simply take up existing queer identities, but rather is involved in shaping them. As Luibhéid points out,

. . . we should not imagine that coherent, predefined lesbian or gay identities always existed among immigrant applicants, and that the checkpoints simply captured these preformed ‘queer’ subjects. To frame the issue in this way is to miss the myriad ways that these checkpoints often regulated the terms by which formation of identity occurs (Luibhéid 2002, 79).

In the Finnish debates on same-sex couples’ family reunification, and as Luibhéid observes in her analysis of the American context, it is apparent

that the way same-sex couples are (or are not) recognized in immigration legislation contributes to defining and shaping queer identities. Partners who might normally not want to live together, but still wish to maintain a close relationship are under pressure to fulfill the minimal two-year cohabitation requirement. And given that the Aliens Act recognizes, as of 2004, not only marriage and cohabitation, but also registered partnership, transnational queer couples might be driven to register a union they would not otherwise have wanted to register in order to fulfill immigration requirements. Yet it is worth recalling that it is not only queer identity formation that is shaped by immigration legislation. Similar processes are at work for heterosexual couples as well, whose sexual identities are only labeled as “family life” when they come in the institutionalized forms of marriage or cohabitation.

Overall, it can be said that immigration legislation shapes and controls certain types of sexual behavior, first and foremost reinforcing the monogamic, hetero-normative family life of cisgender partners. Making the equal right to marriage the cornerstone of LHBT rights has overshadowed other vital aspects in the discrimination against queer applicants (Mosthof 2015). Moreover, claims for same-sex marriage neglects the excluding mechanisms of citizenship and normalizes a hetero-normative family ideal. The recognition of other sexual behavior and alternative family models is pushed aside (see, for example, Brandzel 2005). It is vital to remember that categorization of and discrimination against queer subjects does not cease to be an issue when same-sex couples are recognized by (immigration) law. They are still subject to the same power dynamics that shape and control sexuality in general.

The debates of 1999, which I analyze in Publication I, point in a completely different direction than more current findings in critical queer studies. In my data, the intersection of foreign nationality and homosexuality was presented as the ultimate other. Yet scholars are showing that more recently, the opposite process is at play. Support of “gay rights” features as a national characteristic of a good citizen, “a barometer by which the rights to and capacity for national sovereignty is evaluated” (Puar 2013, 336).

Certain policies, such as the war in the U.S. against terror, use postcolonial images of the backward other against which the self-portrayal of an open and tolerant nation can be presented. This process has been called homo-nationalism (Jauhola and Kantola 2016; Järviö 2015; Puar 2013; Puar 2007). The concept of homo-nationalism shows that defending LHBT rights can be part of a nationalist project that creates certain normative standards about homosexualities. In her analysis of advocacy for people who are seeking asylum on the basis of their sexuality, Nina Järviö presents data in which Finland features as a forerunner in implementing LHBT rights (Järviö 2015). In the U.S., coalitions between queer and migration activists articulate the shared concerns of migration politics and queer politics (Chávez 2013).

My findings on the Finnish debates about same-sex family reunification answer my research question 1, which asks how the regulation of family migration places migrants in intersecting categories of inequality and with what effects. I show that it is the intersection of categories such as homosexuality, race, and nationality that positioned certain migrants as undesired and unworthy of family reunification rights. The effects of this ended up being minor, as the implementation of the law continued to grant same-sex couples the same rights as cohabiting heterosexual ones. Yet the debates shaped a certain public notion of how same-sex couple's unions feature in the political debate. This answers research question 2, in which I ask which gatekeeping processes come into play in discussing and implementing the regulation of family migration. I show that what is at play is a process of moral gatekeeping, both in the form of the gatekeeping of morals, as well as moral+gatekeeping=moral gatekeeping. In connection with the topic of same-sex couples' family reunion, the moral outrage about the forms of families which featured in the debate as being foreign to Finnish culture worked to demand a restriction of family reunion rights for certain groups. As stated above, these bordering processes did not have any legal effect on the way same-sex couples were treated, but the case gave the conservative voices in parliament the opportunity to promote their agenda of propagating heterosexual family norms.

Victimization

The first process of moral gatekeeping related to same-sex couples' family reunion was, as pointed out above, tied to a specific point in time. Although it stretched over several parliamentary hearings, the topic did not dominate the Finnish debates on family migration in general. The second process of moral gatekeeping that I want to address here is probably the most prominent and occurs across institutions (see Table 2 for how it extends through nearly all the publications that make up this thesis). It is familiar from other national contexts as well, namely, the process of victimization. Here, moral gatekeeping works by representing certain migrant positionalities as in need of protection, thereby creating a moral imperative to react and protect these migrants. At the same time, certain family forms are deemed morally unacceptable, as they are declared prone to family structures that victimize migrant women in particular.

In my publications, there are three strands of victimization that I wish to address here.

- violence against migrant women (Publications I, II),
- preventing forced marriages (Publication IV), and
- young and elderly migrants as victims (Publication II).

I argue that these victimizations serve two main functions. First, they produce an ethnic reflection of the “other” which serves to stabilize the politics of Finnish identity; second, they justify restrictions and other policies as solutions to the “problem” of victimized migrant women and children (Enloe 1990; Hagelund 2008). The only exception to the latter is the case of the two elderly grandmothers, which were also cases of victimization; yet instead of being used to justify restrictions on migration, the grandmothers were used to support claims for more inclusive policies. In the so-called “Grandmother Case,” victimization was more closely related to questions of care and social citizenship, which is why it will be analyzed in greater detail under the topic of “Care” in the next section, 5.3.

Victimization is a widespread phenomenon, and Agustin (Agustin 2003) argues that the victimization of certain groups in order to claim rights for them is a trend that has become common in rhetoric on issues related to migration:

There is a growing tendency to victimise poor people, weak people, uneducated people and migrant people. The trend, which began as a way of drawing attention to specific forms of violence committed against women, has now become a way of describing everyone on the lower rungs of power. Routinely, supporters position them as victims in order to claim rights for them, but this move also turns them into victims, and victims need help, need saving—which gives a primary role to supporters. Much rhetoric about migration has fallen into this pattern: migrants, it turns out, are not only vulnerable to exploitation, a patent truth, but they are “victims.” (Agustin 2003, 30)

While the tendency to victimize migrants is a leading way of discussing migration in general, it is particularly dominant in relation to violence against migrant women, and in this discussion, Finland is no exception. As I show in my analyses in Publications I and II, parliamentarians and the media discussed violence in migrant families and particularly honor-related violence at several points throughout the early 2000s. Interestingly, these debates were not a reaction alarmingly high numbers of honor-related violence in Finland, nor were they a reaction to a prominent Finnish case of violence. Instead, the topic entered the political arena from Sweden, where the tragic murder of Fadime Şahindal in 2002 was discussed in the Finnish Parliament in 2003. Şahindal was killed by her father after refusing to agree to an arranged marriage. Her case received broad media coverage in Finland. In the Finnish parliamentary discussions, honor-related violence was not considered a problem in Finland, but fears were expressed that it could become topical in the future. Curiously, it was the liberal politicians from the Green Party and the Swedish People’s Party who took up the issue (Publications I and II). The discussion brought about a convergence of liberal and more conservative

views. Both liberals and conservatives framed “migrant women”¹⁸ as victims of a violent family culture. Yet while liberal politicians suggested improved integration measures to prevent such occurrences in a Finnish context, conservatives called for stricter immigration laws (Publication II).

Violence against migrant women also featured in the Finnish Parliament in 2008, when the implementation of the Integration Act was debated. A report on the debate raised concern that migrant women were at higher risks of family violence than Finnish women, based on the rising percentage of migrant women in women’s shelters (Publication I). Once again, most reactions in parliament on the issue focused on honor-related violence. These debates obscured the fact that the majority of perpetrators who commit violence against migrant women were Finnish men, and also gave a cultural explanation for the violence.

Several parliamentarians stressed that if “they” (referring to migrants) would only learn more about “our” (that is, Finnish) culture, those cases could be prevented, thereby using a logic similar to the debates in 2003 in the case of Fadime Şahindal. The processes taking place here are those of culturalization, which traces the cause of violence in migrant families to a presumably violent family culture. This is a familiar trope and has also been identified in Finnish discourses in the context of welfare professionals. According to Suvi Keskinen, even professionals who guide and teach migrant women perceived the problem as being rooted in their culture, and claimed that these women accept violence as a part of their lives (Keskinen 2011, 374).

While the prevalence of violence against women is high in Finland, the explanations for violence by Finnish perpetrators are significantly different from those given for migrant families. Discussions about violence in families with no recent migrant background have sought individual and psychological causes and do not assume a violent Finnish family culture (Keskinen 2009; Keskinen 2011). The notion that women are oppressed by a violent, in most cases “Muslim,” family culture is a common trope across Europe (Roggeband and Verloo 2007; Grillo 2008; Phillips and Saharso 2008; Langvasbråten 2008; Razack 2004). On a more symbolic level, this notion is used in nation-building processes, where the “other” is used as an ethnic reflection against which national identities can be defined. Linking Finland’s small-scale migration volumes to contexts such as Sweden’s, where the numbers of incoming migrants are much higher, situates Finland firmly in the cluster of European countries with much longer histories of migration and colonial exploitation. Despite not having had any colonies of her own, Finland was as deeply involved in racist representations and oppressions as the colonial

¹⁸ In Finnish, the term would be *maahanmuuttajanaiset*, a word with a rather stigmatizing connotation, much like the expression *maahanmuuttaja* (immigrant). I use the phrase “migrant women,” which is also problematic in reinscribing both sexual and migratory categorizations. Individuals’ lives and identities might be more significantly shaped by things other than their gender or migratory experiences.

powers. Thus, in Finland we find postcolonial legacies representing the orientalized other similar to those in other Nordic countries.

Keskinen (Keskinen 2012) shows convincingly that transnational discourses on Muslim families influence the way Muslims are portrayed in Finnish public discourses. On a political level, I argue that these victimizing discourses are linked to questions of power, control, and agency. Here, the body of the migrant woman works as an “imaginary battlefield” (Keskinen 2011, 367) for debating the definitions of the values seen as constituting the nation.

Particularly in the context of a Nordic welfare state, debates and political measures on violence against women with a migration background are part of what has been referred to as welfare nationalism. According to Keskinen (Keskinen 2011, 371), welfare nationalism in this context refers first of all to the way welfare state policies perform nationalism; second, to the emphasis on a national rhetoric of achieved gender equality; third, to the fact that the perceived cultural and ethnic homogeneity is underscored; and fourth, to the fact that colonial ties and racism are not sufficiently addressed in present Nordic societies (Keskinen 2011).

Another topic that, in addition to honor-related violence, frequently appears in public debates that tend to victimize migrant women is that of forced marriages. While the subject has been featured in immigration debates in other European countries (Bredal 2005b; Phillips and Dustin 2004; Wray 2011), it was not a prominent feature on the agenda of Finnish policymakers during the research period of this study, with the exception of certain media reports and published statements of human rights organizations. Bureaucrats who make decisions on the basis of marriage have voiced their concern about the issue. The immigration bureaucrats I interviewed stated that they would like to prevent forced marriages, yet they had limited means of doing so (Publication IV). They explained that if a marriage fulfills the requirements established by the Aliens Act, they have to accept it and grant the residence permit, even if they suspect that the marriage was forced.

While the limitations of their power and their decision-making authority as bureaucrats was one way of framing this issue, victimizing the women who seek residence permits on the basis of marriage was another prominent theme in these interviews. One bureaucrat referred to them as “poor little girls,” thus casting the women as persons who need to be pitied and looked down upon, a discourse that denies the women their own agency. Victimization and the desire to prevent forced marriages is a prime example of the moral gatekeeping process insofar as the bureaucrat – the gatekeeper – would like to prevent something that she sees as morally problematic, yet is unable to do so.

In the case of forced marriage, as with other issues that are publicly debated, the way in which it is talked about shapes our understandings of the causes of the phenomenon and presents solutions that do not always benefit the people involved. Most important, the solutions tend to be decided on by people who are not themselves affected. In this vein, in her account of

measures against forced marriages and honor-related violence, Helene Razack makes concrete suggestions about how to address these issues while avoiding the pitfall of victimizing and stereotyping (Razack 2004).

Whereas in the case of violence against women and the prevention of forced marriages, it was the intersection of gender, race, and religion that created the subject-position of the oppressed and victimized migrant woman, age also played a central role in the victimizing discourses. As shown in Publication II, children and the elderly were referred to as being in need of protection, making age, both young and old, a marker of vulnerability.

Parliamentarians and the media debated the topic of unattended children who were asylum seekers and who came to Finland without a legal guardian. Publication II argues that the positionality of these children as in need of protection supported arguments for stricter immigration regulations on the one hand as well as more liberal policies on the other. The research showed that editorials in *Helsingin Sanomat* as well as politicians in the Finnish Parliament were arguing for stricter policies in order to solve the “problem” of so-called “anchor children.”

The argument I present in the methodology chapter, 3.4, maintains that the media and the parliament take part in constructing what has been called problem frames. The anchor-child is one such problem frame and quite a powerful one, a notion that has even made its way into everyday language. The term “anchor child” was coined in 2006 by the Finnish Minister of the Interior, conservative Kari Rajamäki of the Social Democratic Party. It was an expression that *Helsingin Sanomat* and parliamentarians used in quotation marks or with the addition of “so-called.” Toward the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, however, it began to appear in the newspaper and in other discussions unquestioned. The logic of the metaphor is that parents would cast their children as “anchors” onto the Finnish “shore,” thereby enabling the rest of the “boat” (the parents and other family members) to be pulled to shore through reunification with the children.

In the course of these debates, parliamentarians from the Social Democratic Party and the National Coalition Party connected the arrival of unaccompanied children with trafficking, the trade in human organs, and smuggling. An editorial in *Helsingin Sanomat* in 2010 voiced concern over young Somali girls who would be brought to Finland by smugglers and sold into prostitution (Publication II). What was not expanded on in the original article is that the case of unaccompanied “anchor children” bears all the elements that Schrover and Schinkel introduce in their account of the logic of problematization, which, according to them, “is characterized by six phases: defining; claiming; legitimizing; expanding; and sensationalizing the problem; and suggestions regarding the causes and consequences via the use of metaphors” (Schrover and Schinkel 2013, 1126). The situation of unaccompanied children was first defined by identifying the object of problematization, in this case, the unaccompanied minor. Then this object was presented as something that exists in Finland to which politics needs to react.

Legitimization followed, which according to Schrover and Schinkel, works by presenting the other as either a threat to “us” or as a victim of their own culture, both of which we found in Finnish parliamentary and media debates on the subject. Next came expansion, in this case, by connecting the problematized object with issues such as organ trade, trafficking, and prostitution. After that, sensationalization was achieved by exaggerating the scope of the issue. Finally, the metaphors that Schrover and Schinkel identify were used, in this case, in the image of the “anchor child” (Publication II).

The solution proposed by conservative and Populist Party representatives for the issue of the anchor child was stricter immigration policies, which would protect the children from their parents’ misuse of them for immigration purposes. Interestingly, the victimized image of the unaccompanied child also worked as a problem frame for the opposite claim, namely, for more inclusive immigration regulations. Proponents of more inclusive policies voiced concerns over whether the unaccompanied children’s siblings should be considered immediate family, the slowness of family reunification processes, and whether or not current policies and practices on family reunion were in the best interests of the child. It appears that the victimization of minors worked both to promote and to hinder claims for inclusion and the right to cultural citizenship (Publication II)

It was not only being young that worked as a marker of inclusion and exclusion, but so did being old, as we show in our analysis of the Grandmother Case (Publication II). In this instance, elderly women already in Finland who had children and grandchildren in Finland, were faced with a deportation order; they were portrayed as victims in the public debate as a way to argue for their cause. I explore this case further in the next section, 5.3, since it is closely related to questions of care and the welfare state on which I will expand. The case also involves dependency, which is why it is the topic of chapter 5.1, as it constitutes an example of dependency required by the state.¹⁹

To summarize, my findings related to processes of victimization provide an answer to research question 2, namely, which gatekeeping processes are inherent in discussing and implementing the regulation of family migration. I show how victimization works as a process of moral gatekeeping (moral+gatekeeping=moral gatekeeping). I argue that Finnish public debates about violence against migrant women and about forced marriages create an image of a helpless victim of violent family structures, which makes use of gender and cultural essentialism and serves to justify protectionist and conservative political responses (Kapur 2002). These findings are very much in line with international scholarship on the topic, and suggest that Finland participates in transnational discourses on these subjects as part of national self-positioning in postcolonial Europe (Keskinen 2012).

¹⁹ As the Grandmother Case shows, dividing research results into different sections is only a matter of presentation, as the results are, after all, connected and furnish examples of different layers of norms, discourses, and political developments that co-constitute each other.

Furthermore, my findings on the victimization processes answer research question 1 on how the regulation of family migration positions migrants in intersecting categories of inequality and with what effects. Here, my main finding is that age is a relevant category of analysis, since both young and old age in connection with gender and race work as markers of exclusion and inclusion via victimization procedures. I show how debates on unattended minors as asylum seekers in particular follow the logic of what Foucault calls “problematizations.” Certain migrants are thereby positioned along intersecting categories of age, race, and gender and through processes of victimization. They feature as victims in arguments for either stricter or more liberal migration regulations.

Assessing and defining “real” marriages

So far, the two processes of moral gatekeeping which I have identified and presented here are debates on same-sex family reunification rights and victimization discourses (on the topics of violence against migrant women, forced marriages, and unaccompanied minors and the elderly). The third process of moral gatekeeping which I found in my analysis of different policy arenas was prevention of so-called “marriages of convenience” and the assessment of “real” marriages. Here, the logic is that only some marriages are considered acceptable to qualify partners for residence permits. While some of the definitions and regulations on which marriages are eligible for family reunification are rather technical, they nevertheless both produce and build on moral understandings of married life. Immigration law and its implementation offer an interesting opportunity in which to explore these understandings. They not only show the meanings attached to the institution of “marriage” by bureaucrats and immigration regulations, but since they deal with transnational families, these meanings intersect with understandings of “Finnish” and “foreign” cultures. These understandings, as I argue later, can sometimes be quite essentializing.

As I show in Table 2, moral gatekeeping processes in connection with detecting “false” marriages took place by constructing certain gender roles in marriage (Publication III), by establishing the expectation that a couple would adhere to a certain “culture” (Publications III and IV) and by questioning the role of the gatekeeper and the way in which the court interferes with his or her decision making. Below, I will elaborate on each of these topics, beginning with gender roles in marriage.

In the analysis of files from the Helsinki Administrative Court, special attention was paid to gender roles in marriage, based on the information that migrants themselves provided in the accounts that they and their lawyers had drafted. It is vital that research on the regulation of immigration does not treat migrants as merely objects of state regulation (Wray 2011). In the court cases dealing with residence permits, it is particularly in the accounts of the marriages and the details that couples and their lawyers choose to

communicate that the agency of the appellants comes to the fore. Lawyers help applicants present their cases in a way that will resonate with the court and the immigration authorities (Carver 2014).

Publication III argues that migrants and their lawyers created a transnational space of gendered understandings of married life. In this space, perceived “Finnish” notions of gender equality intersected with patriarchal perceptions of married life. Different gender roles were identified for husbands and wives who were seeking resident permits on the basis of marriage. In their appeals foreign husbands stressed their participation in work life and the opportunity to provide for their wives and families. This is surprising because one of the key characteristics of Nordic welfare societies is said to be the dual breadwinner model, in which both husbands and wives contribute to the household income by engaging in paid labor (Skevik 2006). Hence, applicants were not trying to show that their marriages complied with dominant hetero-normative family roles in Finland.

It is also worth noting that Finland does not have an income requirement for spouses of Finnish partners, so the eagerness to stress men’s roles as providers does not correspond to any legal requirements. While the applicants themselves stressed the male appellants’ ability and willingness to provide for their families, it was the Court that pointed out the lack of this ability or willingness when the absence was apparent. In the case of one applicant from Ghana, the court determined that he was only providing for his own food expenses and sending the rest of his money to his family in Ghana, a point used against him in the court file (Publication III). Only men stressed their willingness to provide for their families, and only men were criticized by the Court when they were not doing so. Thus, the division of labor that characterized these marriages was quite patriarchal, with the men – as the head of the family – playing the part of the breadwinners.

Whereas men featured as providers, female spouses featured as nurturers, again manifesting traditional gender roles in marriage. Several appellants stressed the mothering abilities of their partners from abroad, sometimes even highlighting how the foreign partner was a better caregiver than the biological Finnish mother of the children (Publication III).

Yet women were not the only good caregivers featured in the appeals; men appeared too. In several instances, the appellant stressed the foreign husband’s role as a father figure to the children of the Finnish resident, or in one case, as a caregiver to his sick spouse. Here, we find a more gender-equal notion of married life, wherein not only women, but also men perform care work in the family.

Conformity with certain notions of what married life should look like and with ideas of how spouses can prove their commitments to each other as caregivers or providers could be analyzed using Judith Butler’s analysis of repetition, which Luibhéid invokes in her study of how migrant women’s agency is inscribed in official documents (Luibhéid 2002, 142). In Publication III, there was no elaboration on the issue of agency from this perspective; it

was observed there that couples navigated between cultural expectations in several contexts and that their agency was manifested in their choice of which gendered division of labor in their marriage was closest to what they felt capable of, were willing, and/or believed correct to disclose in the context of immigration control. Arguably, the perspective of repetition could offer further insights into these processes. The repetition of norms through which social construction operates is of a compulsory nature (Butler 1993). Nevertheless, repetition can be done in a way that challenges the dominant order:

Immigrant women's (and men's) agency is certainly exercised through the possibilities presented by repeating against the grain of official immigration-service requirements. Immigrants often produce documents, answers, information, and forms of appearance that only seem to conform to INS requirements. Yet immigration officials have always been aware of this behavior and attempted to guard against it. Consequently, there is a long history of struggle between immigrants who present themselves as legitimate applicants for admission and officials' efforts to determine whether the applicant truly matches immigration service criteria for admission. (Luibhéid 2002, 142)

While repetition is one way of conceptualizing migrants' agency in this case, another way is understanding the "displaying" of family life (Finch 2007). Carver (2014) uses this notion to analyze how autobiographical narratives of family life are drafted in court appeals or applications for family reunion. In my own analysis, the agency and narratives of the appealing parties was only a subsection of Publication III. This thesis focuses on how the state regulates family migration, and on the meanings that bureaucrats, politicians, and the media attach to family life and migration. Thus, discussions of whether narratives of migrants in family reunion case files are best captured by the notion of repetition (Butler 1993), display (Finch 2007), or other perspectives would furnish an interesting analytical perspective for further research in which migrants' own accounts and perhaps interview data and ethnographic fieldwork could be available.

In both the accounts of the appellants in the court cases (Publication III), as well as in the interviews with immigration bureaucrats (Publication IV), the gendered norms of married life that I presented above intersected with notions of a Finnish or a foreign "culture." It is difficult to treat norms about gender roles and notions of culture separately, as they overlap and intersect. I treat notions such as "Finnish" or any given "foreign" culture, as well as gender roles in a marriage as social constructs that only come into being through the meanings that people attach to them. Thus, in discussing these constructs, I do not argue that there is one essential meaning to any country's "culture"; rather I am concerned with the way in which the culture and meanings attributed to that culture feature in my data.

Legal representatives translate cultural understandings in order to make them compatible with the often ethnocentric assumptions found in immigration regulations (Carver 2014). Notions of culture played a normative role in accounts of the appellants in the court cases. These notions were used to explain why one couple had behaved in a way that immigration authorities found suspicious, such as not living together before marriage or not disclosing information about their cohabitation in the embassy interview when they did live together (Publication III). It was found that the criteria followed by immigration officials were rather ethnocentric. Yet certain ethnocentric ideas could also be used by the appellants to their advantage.

The analysis shows that notions of patriarchal non-western societies were reproduced in court both by the appellants and by the authorities (Publication III). This resonates well with findings in the United Kingdom, where Carver found that legal representatives of appellants for marriage migration cases -

. . . negotiated the real and perceived cultural assumptions of the ECOs [Entry Clearance Officers] and [the imagined] judge and sought to embed arguments against such assumptions within the statement, even as they (re)produced such cultural assumptions as part of their institutional interaction (Carver 2014, 279–80).

Culture also features in the context of assessing marriages for immigration purposes as a tool for measuring “belonging” (Yuval-Davis 2011). As I show in Publication IV, belonging is measured not only by how well applicants adhere to a set of cultural expectations in Finland. Applicants are also required to prove cultural belonging to their country of origin. The bureaucrats stated in the interviews that, if the immigration office or the police know that something is part of the “local culture,” yet the couple behaves in a way that contradicts the convention, officials suspect a possible marriage of convenience (Publication IV).

Thus, a certain degree of cultural conformism is required when applying for family reunion on the basis of marriage. To belong in Finland, migrants must first prove their belonging to their countries of origin through performed marriage practices. This represents a logic similar to LGBTs who seek asylum on the basis of their sexual orientation. As LGBT asylum seekers, they also participate in shaping normative and hegemonic understandings of a gay identity (Järviö 2015; Murray 2014), since they need to conform to the understandings of immigration bureaucrats as to what a “gay” identity is (Järviö 2015).

Weddings can, of course, follow certain local traditions and sometimes consist of religious rituals. But not everyone follows these norms, either in Finland or elsewhere in the world. If an unusual or non-conformist married life seems suspicious, moral gatekeeping prescribes the way married life ought to be conducted (see also Wray 2011). Trying to detect “real marriages” by means of a set of normative expectations, immigration officers can rationalize their decisions “based on little more than personal impression” (Wray 2006,

p. 312). They marshal values that they partly see as universal by combining a certain cultural relativism with an essentialism that stabilizes notions of customs and traditions which in turn are constantly undergoing changes in Finland as elsewhere in the world.

The universality and dominance of western norms is thereby reasserted in and through a cultural relativism that creates stable notions of indigenous cultures to which migrants' marriage practices should conform. Strikingly, this resonates closely with the aforementioned appellants' discourse to the administrative court, which shifts between traditional and modern gender roles in the family (see Publication III).

It is worth noting that, according to the bureaucrats I interviewed, arranged marriages can also be part of what immigration bureaucrats call "local culture" and can thereby qualify as the basis for a residence permit if the marriage has been entered into by both parties on equal terms. Some research on marriage migration suggests that couples need to prove that their marriage is a love marriage and has not been entered into for other reasons, such as getting a residence permit (D'Aoust 2013; Breger 1998; Chetrit 2011; Eggebø 2013a). In one interview, a police officer acknowledged her difficulties in determining the motives behind a marriage and observed that people have different understandings of relationships. According to her, it is therefore difficult to say what could be an acceptable marriage (Publication IV). Immigration bureaucrats thus acknowledge the difficulty of examining the motives behind a marriage using legal instruments and guidelines, while confronted with a myriad of relationships, biographies, and ideas of what a "real" marriage is.

My informants themselves also considered their roles as gatekeepers. Interestingly, several of them referred to the Administrative Court. The Court featured as something positive that helps immigration bureaucrats, as well as being an institution that undermines the bureaucrats' work. The positive view of the Court was that it can "correct" decisions that might be unjust. Bureaucrats felt relieved thereby of some of the burden of making fair decisions. Most informants referred to the Court when they were asked whether or not they found it difficult to make decisions that may potentially separate families. Thus, the Court figured as a corrective that makes difficult decisions easier for the bureaucrats to make (Publication IV).

On the other hand, several informants mentioned the Court when they were asked whether there was something they would like to change in the current family reunification procedures. They found that the slowness of decision-making in the Court undermined their work, arguing as follows: when a bureaucrat decides that a marriage does not fulfill the requirements of family reunification, the couple takes the case to the Administrative Court. While waiting for the Court ruling, the couple continues living together; they might even have children. By the time the Court makes its ruling, up to one and a half years later, there is more proof of a shared family life, which leads the Court to overrule the original decision by the police officer or the officer at the Finnish Immigration Service. Instead of seeing this as a chance for a couple

of uncertain intentions to prove the accuracy of their claims, the officers saw the slowness of the juridical process as making the officers' original decisions appear "in a bad light" (Publication IV).

Here, the passage of time affects the way bureaucrats see their role as gatekeepers. I argue that time and temporality are central and too often under-theorized instruments for measuring affiliation in family reunification cases, which also take into account the length and frequency of visits, phone calls, emails, letters, as well as the time of cohabitation and acquaintance. As I show in my analysis in Publication IV, time and temporality are not just tools with which immigration bureaucrats measure the quality and nature of family ties. The point in time at which this measurement takes place is also relevant.

To summarize my findings on the assessment and definition of "real" marriages, they answer research question 3, which asks how migrant family relations are evaluated for immigration purposes and what this evaluation tells us about gendered understandings of family life. My analysis shows that migrants and their lawyers activated rather traditional notions of gender roles in marriage, with men as providers and women as nurturers. There was also space for representing men as good fathers, but no accounts of women who would be providers for their families.

My findings on notions of culture also provide answers to how migrant family relations are evaluated (research question 3) by showing that in evaluating migrant family relations, ethnocentric conceptions of culture were strategically activated by the couples and their lawyers. Bureaucrats evaluating marriages attributed certain local habits to "the culture." A marriage that did not conform to these habits was suspect. My analysis of culture also contributes to answering research question 2, in which gatekeeping processes are inherent in discussing and implementing the regulation of family migration.

Finally, I showed that bureaucrats contemplate their role as gatekeepers, which directly links to research question 2 on gatekeeping processes. I show that the officials discussed how the Administrative Court features in the gatekeeping process, and I argue that, for immigration bureaucrats, the Court is both a corrective conscience, as well as a juridical process whose slow pace interferes with bureaucrats' decision making.

5.3 CARE AND TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY TIES

It may not seem surprising that care is a relevant issue in studying transnational family ties. Yet to me it was a surprise. Because I chose to focus on the way the state regulates and evaluates transnational family ties and because I was primarily concerned with the way in which state officials or the media discuss these ties, I thought I would be perusing dry policy texts. As a result, I expected to discuss rather technical issues, such as income requirements or proof of regular contact in the form of visits or phone calls. Even though my research clearly focuses on the way the state interferes with care relations in migrant families, I had placed questions of care in a category that I assumed was irrelevant to my research. Research on care and transnational family ties largely concentrates on the families and their practices, not so much on the way states interfere with or shape these practices (Baldassar 2007; Baldassar, Wilding, and Baldock 2007; Bryceson and Vuorela 2002; de Bruine et al. 2013; Vullnetari and King 2008a). And it is true that, for a long time, research on transnational family ties and research on their regulation were rather separate from each other.

Thus, care was one of the topics that I did not set out to analyze when I started my research, but its importance grew out of my findings. This development was also related to the fact that age turned out to be a central category in my analysis, another topic that I did not realize would play such a prominent role. It was the question of the right of aging parents to live with their children (Publication II), as well as the assumption that elderly marriage migrants cannot be in a bona fide marriage (Publication III), that brought the issue of age to the forefront of my analysis.

My findings on care and transnational family ties provide answers to research question 3, on how migrant family relations are evaluated for immigration purposes and what this evaluation tells us about gendered understandings of family life. I show how the care relations of women and men are evaluated in different ways and how the right to care for elderly parents is connected with questions of cultural citizenship. Here, it is the figure of a so-called suitable victim that make some care relations more acceptable than others.

As the question of migration of elderly people has been studied relatively little, my focus on these questions in relation to the regulation of family migration makes my results rather innovative in the international research field. In particular, research that focuses on state regulations and policies has left the question of elderly migration and the related questions of care more or less untouched, probably for reasons similar to the one explained above. The expectation seems to be that questions of care and the elderly are either included in studies on migration and elderly care or belong to the study of transnational family ties.

Nevertheless, care and migration have gradually become a prominent field of scholarly inquiry. There is, for example, a growing literature on the

globalization of care. The logic of this literature is opposite to the logic I am investigating: it is not the person in need of care, but the person providing care who migrates. Research on care migration has, for example, explored migrants' care work as a gendered phenomenon, the exploitation of migrant care workers on the job market, the question of care chains in the case of children left behind, how the globalization of care relates to the privatization of welfare services, as well as racist stereotyping of certain "qualities" of care workers from particular regions or countries (Gavanas 2013; Gavanas 2010; Lutz and Palenga-Möllenneck 2010; Lutz and Palenga-Möllenneck 2012; Näre 2013; Parreñas 2001; Shutes and Chiatti 2012; Wrede and Näre 2013; Bridget Anderson and Shutes 2014).

Related to the above-mentioned questions of care, and closer to the topic at hand, is research on elderly care and grandparenting practices across national borders, which explores how care and emotional relations play out transnationally (Baldassar and Merla 2014; Baldassar, Wilding, and Baldock 2007; Baldassar 2007). An important group for investigation are elderly people who are left behind by migrating adult children (Vullnetari and King 2008b; King and Vullnetari 2006). In the Grandmother Case analyzed in Publication II, it was precisely the question of grandparents who would potentially be left behind which was taken up, but not so much from the perspective of the grandparents as in Vullnetari and King's research. Instead, the article dealt with the contestations of who is a family member and whose caring practices are supported as a right to cultural citizenship.

In conceptualizing what the concept of care actually refers to, Joan Tronto and Berenice Fisher's definition offers a good starting point:

On the most general level, we suggest that caring be viewed as a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web (Fisher and Tronto 1990, 40).

As stated earlier, care was not a central perspective of the thesis at the outset, but three dimensions of care and transnational family ties are nevertheless implicit in the articles, namely, gender, kinship, and cultural citizenship. I will discuss these dimensions one at a time in the subsequent sections. In the table below, I show how they played out in the publications and which topics were related to them.

Table 3. Dimensions of care and transnational family ties and how they appear in publications of the thesis.

	Care and cultural citizenship	Gendered concepts of care	Care and kinship
Publication II	Intersectionality and whitewashing of suitable victims	gendering suitable victims as care receivers	contestations of the family, critique of Finnish family ideal
Publication III		<p>intersections of gender and age in expectations of care receivers</p> <p>Notions of “good care-givers” and gender roles in the marriage</p>	<p>closer ties to kin than to married partner</p> <p>Need to choose between “new” and “old” family</p>

Care and cultural citizenship

Out of all the analyses I did for this thesis, one case stood out from the rest: the so-called Grandmother Case. Here, instead of a discourse that criticizes family practices of migrant families or of building dichotomies between “us” and “the other,” we find a case in which a large spectrum of different actors in society called for compassion, for inclusion, and for a re-evaluation of Finnish notions of the family. In Publication II, this problem frame is labeled “Finnish culture as a problem” (see Publication II as well as the method chapter 3.4 for definitions and methodological considerations on problem frames).

In 2008 and 2009, two elderly women who were grandmothers of Finnish citizens and both of whom were at that time were in Finland, received a deportation order. One grandmother was from Egypt, the other from Russia, and both had children and grandchildren living in Finland. Their cases sparked off campaigns by NGOs such as Amnesty International and the Finnish No Border Network, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, and even the country’s president at the time, Tarja Halonen, all of whom made pleas on their behalf. In analyzing the way their case was presented in the Finnish media and parliament, it appeared that one reason for the success and

widespread support of their campaign was that, in their claims for belonging, the grandmothers were turned into examples of hetero-normative family values and positioned as fitting racially and culturally into the mainstream concept of acceptable family life. In both cases, the European Court of Human Rights prevented their immediate deportation from Finland.

While the original publication shows how the vulnerability of the grandmothers in question is related to intersectionality and advocacy for cultural citizenship rights, it does not take up questions of the body and ethics of care (Publication II). Below, I want to show how gendered conceptualizations of care and of being deserving are embodied and thus connected with questions of cultural citizenship.

Cultural citizenship captures several notions that are relevant in this case. By conceptualizing the Grandmother Case as negotiations over cultural citizenship, Karina Horsti and I show that it is central to expand the traditional view of citizenship (as something rational and only belonging to the public sphere) by feminist contestations which argue that the very intimate sphere, the private sphere, is relevant to the political. We follow the view that citizenship cannot be defined or claimed only by autonomous (male) subjects in a public arena, but cuts across homes and households, bodies and illnesses, cultural practices and caring arrangements. Here, cultural citizenship also combines feminist debates on the body and care with those of feminist citizenship literature (Beasley and Bacchi 2000). Plummer speaks of intimate citizenship (Plummer 2003), which in our understanding falls under the category of cultural citizenship. Yet we found that the idea of cultural citizenship grasps the contestations at play better than intimate citizenship, since the way of caring for elderly family members was framed as a “culture” from which Finnish families could also benefit. Thus, we use the term less as an analytical device and more as a means to take into account the normative perspective of public debates of citizenship and migrant families:

To study culture from the political-theoretical concept of citizenship allows us to ask the normative political question: what do the novel national and global constellations in which “culture discourse” functions mean with respect to inclusion and exclusion, participation and marginalisation? (Vega and Boele van Hensbroek 2010, 246).

As the cases involved elderly women, it was particularly their role as grandmothers which made them suitable objects of compassion and demands for inclusion. We argue that it was the fact that they were women which marked them as vulnerable and thus as in need of receiving help from their grown children. I am yet not dealing primarily with gender here, as that will be the focus of the next section. Instead, I want to stress the intersectionality of this case: it was the combination of race, age, gender, and religion which positioned the women in the cases as being worthy of compassion.

The deservingness of the two grandmothers from Egypt and Russia is in fact a prime example of how intersectionality works. The public debates on the deportation of these grandmothers whitewashed them as “one of us,” and it was their specific positioning as Christian, female, “white,” and members of “Finnish” families that made them eligible for cultural citizenship. Finland’s most influential nationwide newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* first took their side, but later departed from that view, stating that incoming elderly migrants would be too expensive for the Finnish welfare state. Thus, nationally-bound economic justifications eventually outweighed the moral ones, or, as I explore in my consideration on moral and economic gatekeeping in chapter 2.3, economic gatekeeping was stronger than the moral claims made on the women’s behalf. The fear of an unknown number of dependent grandmothers waiting to enter Finland featured in the later phase of the debate. Welfare appeared as a limited resource that primarily covers families whose members live in Finland, are Finnish citizens, and thus have more rights as citizens. “Our” citizenship came to be hierarchically above “theirs” (Publication II).

Furthermore, the debate concerned not only these migrant women’s belonging, but also touched on the right of Finnish citizens (the children of these grandmothers) to invite their mothers to Finland where they could be cared for. In contrast, the debate on so-called “anchor children,” also analyzed in Publication II, concerned the right of an unaccompanied minor to invite his/her caregivers to Finland. Those who opposed family reunification in these cases demoralized the parents and argued that the children were in danger in Finland and should be cared for in the grandmothers’ home countries (Publication II).

The Grandmother Case²⁰ reveals several dimensions of how the logic of care operates in connection with intersectional contestations over cultural citizenship. Hoppania and Vaittinen explain how the logic of care disrupts processes of commodification:

It is a logic that recognises the needs of the material body as unpredictable, unlimited and, hence, impossible to fully manage within any given “household”, indeed in any economic order. In the political economy thus, we argue, care is a constant disruption: an opening of the political that cannot be tamed or erased. This means that as long as our bodies need other bodies for survival and subsistence, there is relatedness of care that continues to make the economy political (Hoppania and Vaittinen 2015, 72).

When Hoppania and Vaittinen speak of a “household full of bodies,” which is the title of their article (Hoppania and Vaittinen 2015), it resonates with the

²⁰ I am aware of the difficulty related to this name, but I am using “Grandmother Case” because this is how it has been referred to in the public discussion; there is even a Wikipedia site called “Isoäitien käännättämistapaus” (Grandmother Case). Despite the strong and essentializing label, calling the incident the Grandmother Case shows how it connects with gendered care and kinship relations.

“grandmother case.” Here, it is the contestation over whether or not the bodies of these grandmothers can and should be part of the “household” and whether they qualify for being included in the Finnish system that grants them elderly care. It is the combination of measuring the specifically physical needs of the women in question and whether their bodies are dependent enough on their Finnish family members, on the one hand, with debates on the financial costs to the welfare system of allowing family reunification for the elderly on the other hand that makes this case an example of the political economy of care.

To prove their dependency on their families to the bureaucrats, elderly family members, such as grandmothers and their families, need to prove their dependency. They have to present reliable evidence, first, of their physical health; second, of the lack of institutional or familial care provisions in their home country; and third, of the suitability of their living arrangements in Finland. The bodies of these elderly family members thus become material sites of examination in the effort to prove physical dependency on others (Irni 2010). One criterion in the Finnish Aliens Act states that, if a person’s bodily functions slowly deteriorate due to aging, this does not count as a condition that allows the person to qualify for a residence permit with her or his children in Finland. Thus, it is not the aging dependent body that obtains access to Finland, but rather the body which suddenly is left without care, the body that cannot maintain physical functions without the assistance of others (George 1991).

Particularly for the elderly, it seems rather arbitrary and difficult to make a distinction between health impairments that have grown slowly over time and those that have worsened suddenly. Local health care professionals and their assessment of the state of health of the presumably dependent elderly thus play a vital gatekeeper role (Barzilai-Nahon 2009; Corra and Willer 2002; Grumbach et al. 1999).

In the public statements of the families in question, and in the campaigns of religious and advocacy groups, a call was made for cultural citizenship rights for families living in a transnational condition. These groups based their arguments on the view that nation-state borders produce inhumane structures for the families in question. Finnish citizens are unable to care for their transnational family members, and therefore they are unable to practice cultural citizenship. The Finnish public widely supported this struggle at a time when the political climate was rather critical of migration (Publication II).

As this case shows, entering the country in order to receive care is difficult. It does not seem easier, however, to enter the country as an elderly person who would provide care. I will briefly elaborate on a recent case which occurred in 2015 and thus was not part of the analysis in Publication II. The Finnish media reported a story of a Chinese grandfather who wanted to permanently stay in Finland to take care of his grandchildren. The plan was for the grandfather to apply for a worker’s permit, his argument being that he would be employed by his son’s family to care for the grandchildren. The Chinese grandfather, who

was in Finland when applying for the permit, was expelled and furthermore is not allowed to enter the Schengen area for two years because his “employer,” his own family, was not able to give an accurate account of his working hours. As a result, the Finnish Immigration Service did not believe that he was actually going to be employed (Kerkelä 2015).

From the perspective of dependency, this case shows the ambivalence of dependencies at work (see chapter 5.1 for further discussion of dependency). The Chinese man was not (yet) dependent on his family in Finland, but rather was planning to help his family here. His work caring for the children would probably have reduced the family’s need for public childcare and other assistance. Yet care work in the family was not seen as a “real” occupation warranting a residence permit. The officials argued that the grandfather was circumventing immigration regulations by claiming to be working for his son and daughter-in-law.

Gendered concepts of care

Care is a prominent topic in feminist analyses of society, the welfare state, the family, and social relations in general. As Daly and Rake state, “[a]s a defining feature of both private life and public provision, then, care serves to reveal how the linkages between family, state and society are gendered” (Daly and Rake 2003, 49).

Most informal care work is carried out within the family by women (Daly and Rake 2003). Thus, it is not surprising that in my data, conceptualizations of care relations and the family were often gendered. In the results of the publications that make up this thesis, questions of gender and care intertwined in two ways. First, the intersection of gender with other categories classified certain migrants as being in need of care. Elderly women featured as the receivers of care, an argument that worked both to promote the inclusion of certain migrants (Publication II) and against the family who applies for family reunification (Publication III). The second way in which gender and care were relevant in the evaluation of family ties for family reunification was in the case of transnational marriages. Here, the notion of a “good care-giver” worked as proof of a shared family life (Publication III).

I will first explore how certain migrants were typecast as needing care and how that played into conceptualizations of family life and the granting of residence permits on the basis of family ties. In the Grandmother Case, analyzed in Publication II, gender worked as a category that represented migrant women in need of care. The argument by the families of these women and their advocates was that the women’s state of health was too precarious to leave them without their families in their respective home countries. The Aliens Act requires that a person seeking family reunification with so-called “other family members” must be completely dependent on the person living in Finland. It is extremely difficult to get a residence permit on these grounds, so it is only natural that the families stressed the fact that these women were in

need of care by their adult children in Finland. The grandmothers' gender, for example, played a crucial role in framing their case in the general public.

Being vulnerable and dependent on someone else for physical survival are traits that tend to be attributed to females. In this dual understanding which dominates modern political thinking, the mind is part of the autonomous political and masculine sphere (Beattie and Schick 2013; Vaittinen 2015). As Vaittinen argues, these divisions are discursive, and they mark certain things as masculine and other things as feminine. The very notions of care, vulnerability, and dependency are regarded as feminine. This is a crucial point, as it helps explain why it was particularly women's physical vulnerability that functioned as a trigger for nationwide solidarity in a campaign for the grandmothers' residence permits. If a person's dependency and vulnerability due to aging is coded as effeminate, regardless of that person's gender (Isaksen 2002; Vaittinen 2015, 103), then it is clear that elderly women's vulnerability resonated with common conceptions of bodies in need. It was thus easier to feel and argue for compassion for an elderly woman than it would have been in the case of an elderly man.

Nevertheless, the assumption that elderly women and their adult children are in a care relation with each other also worked against the family reunification of some migrants. In data from cases of the Helsinki Administrative Court, which is analyzed in Publication III, elderly Russian women were applying for a residence permit on the basis of marriage with Finnish men. They also had adult children in Finland. In the eyes of both the Court and the Finnish Immigration Service, the fact that they had other family than only husbands in Finland made it less likely that they were moving to Finland because they wanted to live with their Finnish husbands. The officials considered it much more plausible that the women wanted to be closer to their children and grandchildren and serve as care-givers for the grandchildren or be cared for by their children. Because the women's adult children were female, this strengthened the assumption of a mutual care relationship: the adult daughter would care for her elderly mother, and the mother would be look after the grandchildren (Publication III).

Statistics show that, despite the fact that women's participation in working life is rather high in Finland, most of the care work in families is still done by women. Having been care-givers themselves, the women also embody the idea that the elderly are deserving: they have done their share of caring when they were younger and are entitled to be cared for by their family in old age. It is clear that the advocacy for the elderly women in the Grandmother Case discussed earlier built on the gendered perceptions of family that prevail in Finnish society, and at the same time contributed to shaping these perceptions. In other words, it is easy to argue for the right of grandmothers to stay with their families, because the understanding is that grandmothers are worthy of compassion and have the right to be cared for. When it comes to the assumption that elderly women who marry in Finland are actually moving

here to be close to their “other” family, the question becomes more complicated.

Our analysis of the court cases provides an example of the strict separation of categories for entry into the country under Finnish migration law. If a person applies for a residence permit on the basis of marriage, then marriage and only marriage is accepted as a basis for this permit, a stand that strongly resembles the primary purpose rule in the UK (Sachdeva 1993). As anyone who studies family sociology, psychology, or social work knows, family ties cannot be separated into categories, but rather are intertwined. The reasons a person would want to move to Finland are as many as the ties and connections this person has to family members near and far. The fact that close ties to family members in Finland is an argument against immigration shows how the legislation in this area operates: it seems mostly aimed at excluding as many applicants as possible rather than really trying to make it possible for transnational family members to reunite across borders.

Care and kinship

The evaluation of family ties implies an evaluation not only of care relations, but also of kinship. Often family reunification is about identifying “real” biological kinship ties, even through DNA analysis (Heinemann et al. 2015). In the material analyzed for this thesis, however, questions of kinship and care were less about giving proof of existing biological ties. Instead, in my material, I found negotiations over who can be considered a family member and which family members are considered “close enough.” At times, biological and non-biological ties were set up against each other. Negotiations over such positions played out in three different ways. First of all, the relationship between biological kin and that between married partners was juxtaposed (Publication III). Second, applicants for family reunification were forced to choose between their family in Finland and their family in their home country (Publication III). Here, it seemed that biological ties worked to override social care relations. Third, I identified a critique of the Finnish nuclear family²¹ and the way in which the care of the elderly and kinship ties were negotiated in the Grandmother Case (Publication II).

Here, I will first explore the way in which care and kinship come into play and show how biological ties and marital ties were played out against each other. In several cases of Russian women who were married to Finnish citizens and were living in Russia, yet had grown children living in Finland, the immigration authorities questioned the validity of the women’s marriage. As shown in Publication III, the authorities did not believe that the women in question were moving to Finland to join their Finnish husbands in Finland,

²¹ On the way in which the nuclear family works as an invisible paradigm in regulation of the family and in legal definitions of the family, see (Mustasaari 2015).

but rather that the true intention behind the application for a Finnish residence permit was to live with/closer to their children (and sometimes also grandchildren). Curiously, when faced with decisions over biological kin and care across borders, the immigration authorities are not convinced that marriage as a bond is strong enough to qualify for family reunion with a Finnish husband. One reason for this argument was related to the living arrangements: because the women were going to be sharing an apartment with their daughters, they were automatically assumed to be primarily living in Finland because of their daughters, not to be with their Finnish husbands.

While the gendered assumptions of care relations between mothers and their adult children are one aspect of these decisions, another aspect clearly relates to the dominance of biological kin over family formation via marriage. Yet close family ties to a child living in Finland presents the marriages of the appellants in a bad light: the biological ties to the adult children are seen as the main reason for obtaining a residence permit. This resembles the primary purpose rule in Great Britain, which was in force between 1980 and 1997. According to this rule, someone married to a British citizen had to prove that the primary purpose of the marriage was not to obtain a residence permit. If they were not able to do so, entry could be denied. This caused hardships for thousands of couples (Sachdeva 1993). In Finland, the primary purpose of an applicant has to be marriage to a Finnish partner; if other ties, including biological family ties, enter into the equation, these can be used against the applicant.

It is, of course, important to point out that only a limited number of cases has been analyzed for this research. The findings cannot be generalized to serve as proof that biological kin always present an obstacle to obtaining a residence permit on the basis of marriage in Finland. Rather, the present study exemplifies the logic by which this bargaining of familial affiliations takes place.

The second way in which care and kinship intertwined in the question of immigrating to Finland was by forcing applicants to choose between their biological family back home and their new Finnish marital partners and their families. As I show above, biological ties to Finland formed an obstacle to getting a residence permit, but as shown in Publication III, family ties abroad also worked against the applicants. There were several cases in which someone who was married to a Finn had other family members in their country of origin, such as children from a previous marriage. In the case of Tiina and Abdul (Publication III), the negative decision by the Finnish Immigration Service was based on several factors. One was that Abdul had a child from a previous relationship in Turkey. According to the Immigration Service, it was circumstances of Turkish culture that made it evident that the applicant had family in Turkey, even though he was married in Finland (Publication III). In this as in several other cases, the couples assured the court that the applicant had not been in touch with the children of the previous relationship for years (see Publication III). In Tiina and Abdul's case, the Administrative Court

overturned the decision of the Finnish Immigration Service, because the couple was able to show that they had visited their closest family regularly.

The third way in which care and kinship came into play relates to the critique of the Finnish nuclear family and the way that care of the elderly and kinship ties were negotiated in the Grandmother Case (Publication II). While I explored above how this case relates to questions of transnational care and intersectional dimensions of victimization, the debate also gave rise to a critique of Finnish family norms. The Christian Democrats, for instance, criticized Finnish notions of family in which inter-generational ties are breaking down and demanded that Finland learn from the more inclusive family models in which members of the younger generation look after their parents.

In this situation, the migrant family functions as a trope for stereotypical perceptions, but instead of being threatening and oppressive, the Christian Democrats activated an imaginary situation in which the migrant family had a culture of caring, a culture that stands in opposition to Finnish individualized family structures. Cultural citizenship rights featured in these debates as the right to care for elderly family members. The case provided the Christian Democrats a discursive space to promote their own conservative and heteronormative family values. The Christian Democrats proposed a change to the Aliens Act in order to facilitate family reunification with elderly family members, but the motion did not make it into law and lapsed when the current parliamentary period came to an end in April 2011 (see Publication II).

While in today's Finland adult children usually live independently from their parents, this has not always been the case: until 1970 children had the legal obligation to take care of their parents and grandparents (Väisänen 2011). But even today, relatives play a crucial role in providing and coordinating the care of their aging relatives. With the aging of Finnish society and a constant battle over resources for care (Vaittinen 2015; Hoppa and Vaittinen 2015), the role of the family might even grow in importance. The Christian Democrats wish to strengthen these kinds of familial welfare models in which family members provide care. Thus, the case of the grandmothers from Egypt and Russia was a perfect opportunity for the party to advocate their family values publicly in a case with which the public had great sympathy.

6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

To conclude, I will elaborate on some of the central themes taken up in this thesis and the results. Rather than give an all-encompassing overview, I will raise some key concerns that have wider implications for the research questions of this thesis and for the topic as a whole. After briefly presenting the three findings, I will expand on each in more detail. Finally, I will explore the racializing effects of migration regulations and consider the societal and academic relevance of this thesis.

I arrived at three main conclusions. First, I argued that migration regulations cause, prevent, and require dependence: dependence on the sponsor/spouse, dependence on the welfare state, and dependence on a caring family member. Each of these dependencies has different implications and effects for different, intersectionally positioned groups of migrants. Second, this thesis showed that the way in which migrant families are evaluated is part of the dual process of moral gatekeeping. On the one hand, moral justifications are used to argue for the inclusion or exclusion of certain families (moral+gatekeeping=moral gatekeeping), while on the other hand, the gatekeeping of morals works to portray certain families as a threat to Finnish family norms. Here, it is particularly the victimization of certain subjects that features in these gatekeeping processes. Third, I showed that gendered assumptions about care relations influence whether or not family ties qualify a person for a residence permit in Finland. I show how the care relations of women and men are evaluated differently and how the right to care for elderly parents is connected with questions of cultural citizenship.

In my first main finding, I show that dependency is a central element when family ties are evaluated by immigration regulations. Migrant identities are shaped and created by immigration regulations, and this holds true especially in the question of dependence. For those trying to obtain a residence permit on the basis of family ties, dependence can be a requirement for being able to reside legally in Finland. This dependence is either created legally by the way in which one's residence permit is tied to a spouse, or it is required by law, such as when elderly parents must be completely dependent on their adult children in Finland in order to be allowed to enter the country as immigrants.

While Fraser and Gordon (1994) argue that dependence has not always carried negative implications, the way dependence plays out in the regulation of family migration shifts between positive and negative connotations. This dependency is often not even qualitatively measured by an actual assessment of how dependent a person is on another. In the case of unaccompanied children, for example, it is only the children's date of birth and its relation to the date on which the residence permit is decided that are relevant.

In my second main finding, I show how victimization works as a process of moral gatekeeping. I argue that Finnish public debates on violence against

migrant women and forced marriages create an image of a helpless victim of violent family structures, which makes use of gender and culture essentialism and serves to justify protectionist and conservative political responses.

Bodies of migrants, particularly those of women, have often served as battlegrounds over definitions of belonging, bordering processes, and definitions of human rights (Keskinen 2009). Larger debates about the headscarf, forced marriage, or honor-related violence all relate to these questions and are incorporated into the processes of moral gatekeeping. Even a pregnant body can place someone in the category of illegality (Luibhéid 2013).

By marking certain bodies appear vulnerable and oppressed and by conceptualizing others as oppressive and dangerous, Finnish public debates and policies contribute to transnational discourses on the migrant other. At the same time, this is part of the proliferation of borders, which intersect the bodies of family members. Presenting certain migrant families as unacceptable and dangerous is part of highlighting and imposing universalist notions of Finnish norms and values. The universality and dominance of western norms is reasserted in and through a cultural relativism that creates stable notions of indigenous cultures to which migrants' marriage practices are expected to conform.

In my third main finding, I show how categorizations of gender, race, class, and age intersect to create the subject positions of those who are deemed to be in need of care or to be providers of care or potential providers of care. The elderly woman and the dependent child in need of care feature in public debates as suitable victims with rights of cultural citizenship and belonging. At the same time, their need for care becomes a site of bordering, as economic gatekeeping aims to exclude elderly migrants who might become a burden on the welfare state.

Care, gender, and generation can also be part of the expectation of care. Elderly marriage migrants are assumed to be moving to Finland in order to care and/or be cared for by their adult children and grandchildren. This causes authorities to deny the residence permits, deeming their marriages to Finnish men fraudulent. Their biological connection to their kin in Finland works against them. This logic seems completely contradictory, and it shows that family migration is by no means designed to unite separated family members. If having both a spouse and children reduces one's chances of obtaining a residence permit by comparison with having only a spouse, legal categorizations are unable to capture the multitude of sometimes messy family relations that spread across or fall between the categories provided and created by migration law.

The expectation of care relations also extends to married couples and their relationships to their spouses' children. Notions of a good care-giver were used by migrants and their lawyers to convince authorities of the quality of their marriage and of the acceptability of the marriage to immigration authorities.

These discussions on care are related to the human body and its vulnerability, as well as to physical functions of the able-bodied. DNA analysis as part of family reunification processes links the evaluation of family ties to the question of biological citizenship. The body and its cells attest to the existence of family ties. The sick body in need of care, which features in debates on elderly migrants' right to reunite with their parents, similarly adds a material and physical element to the evaluation of migrants' family ties. Here, I follow Hoppania and Vaittinen's argument that "care must be conceived as a corporeal relation. Namely, while the ethics of care tradition perceives relatedness in immaterial 'moral' terms and as deriving from the practices of caring, in our definition, the body-in-need lies in the very origin of all care relations" (Hoppania and Vaittinen 2015).

In this vein, however, not all bodies are seen equally as being in need. One relevant question that I have not taken up in my discussions, but is implicit and also closely linked to my considerations of race and whiteness is that of racism and racialization. Several authors have pointed out how immigration law perpetrates racism (Jakubowski 1997; Aiken 2007; Wray 2011). In his research on visa officers, Satzewich states that discrimination against certain groups of migrants is too readily condemned as institutional racism. He admits that certain applicants from certain countries or regions face disadvantages and that their applications are examined more thoroughly and with different horizons of expectations for fraud, but he does not consider these disadvantages to be based on race. Rather, he attributes them to macro-level forces that are related, for example, to the probability of migrants from certain areas of the world being able to enter a country legally (Satzewich 2015; Satzewich 2014). Yet, and here I disagree with Satzewich, these macro-structures have colonial legacies and are indeed racist insofar as they developed within a system that was built on racial inequality and exploitation. The question of whether or not a certain area of the world is conflict-ridden or of how global wealth is distributed is part of an ongoing historical continuum of European and white exploitation of the racialized other (Rigo 2009; Loftsdottir and Jensen 2012; Mulinari et al. 2009; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). If only deliberate acts of racial exploitation could be called racism, it would be hard to identify racism, as hardly anyone would claim to promote a racist agenda intentionally (Rastas 2004; Williams 1985; Blauner 1972). It is hardly a coincidence that in our statistics showing Finnish residence permits granted to marriage migrants, Leinonen and I demonstrate that male applicants from the U.S. have an acceptance rate in Finland of 99 percent, while Somali men have an acceptance rate of only 50 percent, the lowest percentage among all male applicants (see Publication III).

In Publication III, we take the same position as Satzewich and accept that we cannot satisfactorily define racism within the scope of an article. Racist tendencies are in fact related to migration status, since countries with the lowest acceptance rates are also countries from which migrants tend to arrive

as asylum seekers. This status in turn casts suspicion on their applications for a residence permit on the basis of marriage.

As I revisit this statement in light of the analysis of this thesis summary as a whole, I conclude that racial exclusion and racial hierarchies are not only the direct actions of a single immigration bureaucrat against a single incoming migrant. Rather, each decision, categorization, and intersectional positioning of a family migrant is embedded in larger structures of domination and subordination. Laws that are seemingly neutral can also have racializing effects. Thus, the key outcome of my thesis is that, in the regulation of family migration, formal and informal axes of exclusion are part of one and the same continuum, since they are based on a set of shared assumptions, discourses, and modes of thought that categorize and label migrants.

The broader resonance of this research on family migrants and what it contributes to academic and non-academic debates on migration regulation remains to be clarified. One could argue that in times of intense debates over the way Europe secures its borders – and this thesis summary has been written during the so-called migration crisis of 2015 – the intersectional position of a Russian grandmother, for example, is rather trivial. Yet it is not. We could ultimately argue that all migration is family migration: hardly any person is without a family attachment, and in migrating, a person is likely either to leave a family behind or to form new family ties in their new place of residence. As policies on family migration become more restrictive and selective, many sponsors and their families may never be able to apply for family reunification. While such cases do not appear in any statistics, these policies have a lasting effect on migrants in Finland and in any country where regulations on migration are becoming ever more restrictive.

Family ties are more complicated than can be accounted for by single categories. As migrants fall in and out of categories, and as their lives are shaped by the length, quality, and duration of residence permits, their precarious situations create a system of differential inclusion (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). Furthermore, when these categories are based on a hetero-normative, highly gendered, and racialized conceptualization of acceptable family life, the system of differential inclusion shapes the opportunities and experiences of those affected by it through a governmentality of migration, which permeates people's everyday lives.

Yet, and this is a point that tends to be forgotten, the exclusionary practices do not exist in a parallel universe. They are part the same power structures that create exclusions at every level of society and are even part of and embedded in those structure. There is no clear-cut division between different categories of oppression and the oppressed, between privilege and exclusion. Gatekeeping is not what some people do to others, but rather is an integral part of the societal structures of which all knowledge production is a part, including this thesis.

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APPENDICES:

PUBLICATIONS I, II, III AND IV

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS